Cricket®

Cobblestone™

Discover American History

I found the squirrels, Ebenezer!
Come on in, the water is fine!
Come on, guys! We've still got the tour of El Morro and a guided walk through Old San Juan...
Ah, this is the life!
Time for a nap.

A VISIT TO PUERTO RICO

VISIT…

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

March 2023

Cobblestone
Discover American History

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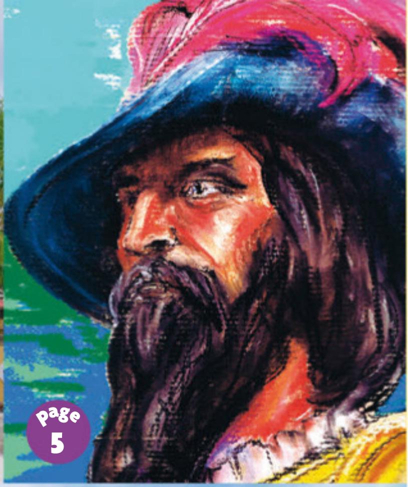

ABOUT THE COVER

For many years, it was illegal to display the Puerto Rican flag. A flag to represent the island originally was designed in 1892, when Puerto Ricans were fighting for their independence from Spain. Prior to that time, for 400 years, the Spanish flag was flown. Today, the Puerto Rican flag is a proud symbol of the island.

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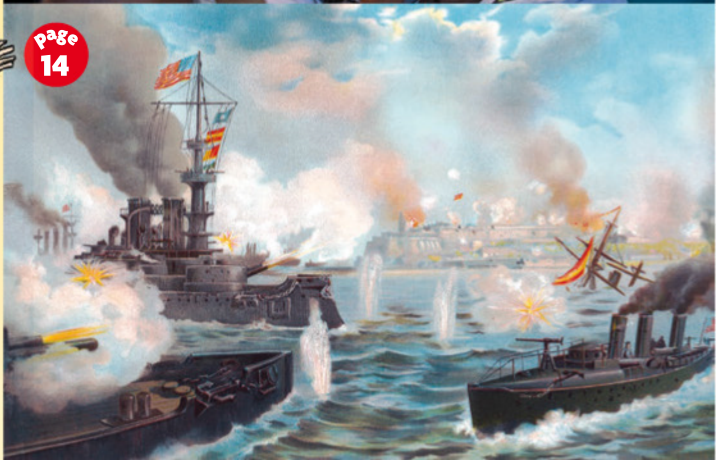

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Ahhh! Puerto Rico!
The beautiful scenery!
The delicious food!
The fascinating history!

Getting Started

Puerto Rico is a small island with a big presence. Its rich heritage is pulled from a combination of Indigenous Taino people, Spanish conquerors, enslaved Africans, and its relationship with the United States. Most Puerto Ricans speak Spanish, but the island's official languages are Spanish and English.

Puerto Rico is located in the Caribbean Sea about 1,000 miles south and east of Florida. Most of the island is comprised of hills and mountain slopes. Lowlands and sandy beaches are found along coastal areas. The island's warm, rainy climate doesn't change much with the seasons. Its beautiful beaches and dramatic waterfalls have made it a popular tourist destination.

For centuries, large agricultural crops of tobacco, sugar cane, and coffee fueled Puerto Rico's economy. Following investment by U.S. and European nations in the 20th century, Puerto Rico shifted into manufacturing—textiles, clothing, ceramics, processed foods, and wood products. Modern factories support newer industries, such as petrochemical, electronics, and medical equipment. Most Puerto Ricans today have made the move from rural areas to suburban or urban locations.

Puerto Rico is one of 14 islands or groups of islands that the U.S. government administers as a territory. Only five of those territories have permanent populations. Puerto Rico is one of them. (The other four are American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.)

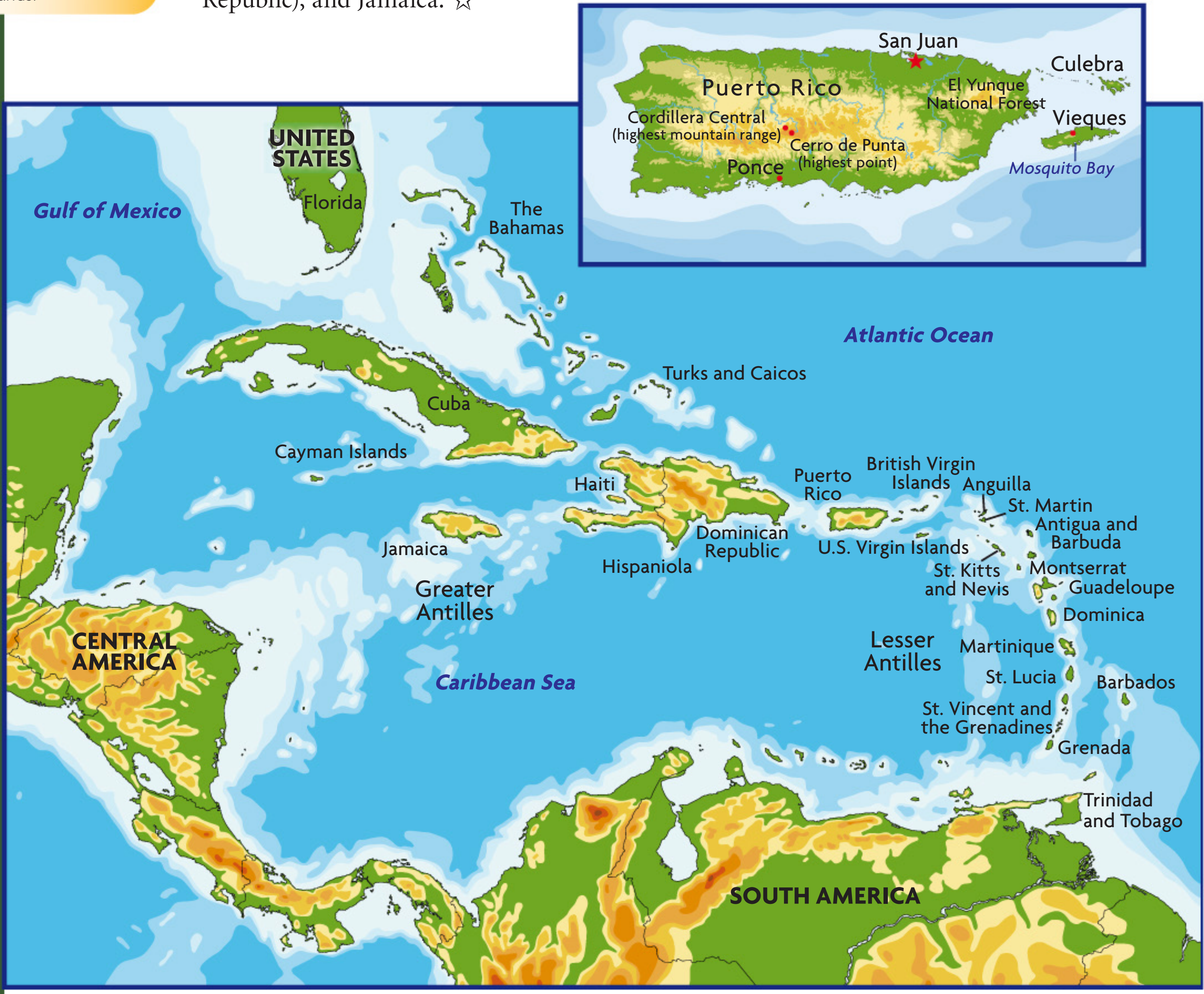
The relationship between the United States and its territories has created some political and economic tensions. This is especially true with Puerto Rico. Some Puerto Ricans would like to be an independent nation. Other Puerto Ricans have expressed a desire to become the 51st U.S. state. The debate continues, but the outcome won't change the pride Puerto Ricans have in their unique culture and identity. ☆

PUERTO RICO

Island of Enchantment

Puerto Rico is an archipelago of 143 islands. Only the three largest islands—Puerto Rico, Vieques, and Culebra—are inhabited by citizens. At about 100 miles long and 35 miles wide, Puerto Rico is the largest island. The remaining islands are small keys, islets, and atolls. Some of them are used as reserves or parks for nature or wildlife overnights. Puerto Rico is part of the Greater Antilles chain of islands. The other islands in the chain are Cuba, Hispaniola (which is divided between the nations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic), and Jamaica. ☆

An archipelago is a chain or group of islands.


San Juan
Culebra
Puerto Rico
El Yunque
National Forest
Vieques
Cordillera Central
(highest mountain range)
Cerro de Punta
(highest point)
Ponce
Mosquito Bay
UNITED STATES
Florida
Gulf of Mexico
The Bahamas
Atlantic Ocean
Turks and Caicos
Cuba
Cayman Islands
Haiti
Puerto Rico
British Virgin Islands
Anguilla
St. Martin
Antigua and Barbuda
Dominican Republic
U.S. Virgin Islands
Jamaica
Hispaniola
St. Kitts and Nevis
Montserrat
Guadeloupe
Greater Antilles
Dominica
CENTRAL AMERICA
Lesser Antilles
Martinique
Caribbean Sea
St. Lucia
Barbados
St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Grenada
Trinidad and Tobago
SOUTH AMERICA

Spanish Conquest

by Elizabeth Howard

The promise of gold and a sea route to India. Those were the two main reasons why Spain's King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella backed Christopher Columbus's voyages. Columbus made four journeys across the Atlantic Ocean between 1492 and 1502. But instead of finding a trade route to India, he landed in the Americas. Thinking it was India, he called the land "the Indies" and the people there "Indians." Sailing from island to island in the Caribbean Sea, he claimed them for the Spanish king and queen.

More than 1,000 years earlier, the Indigenous Taino people had migrated from the northern coast of South America and settled on a number of those Caribbean islands. They lived in small villages, grouped by clans and ruled by a *cacique,* or male chief. Their society was matrilineal and agricultural. Women made decisions related to families and local Taino village

Matrilineal means of or based on kinship with the female line of a family.

Cassavas are the roots of a shrubby tropical plant.

West Indies was a term adopted by colonizing Europeans to refer to islands in the Caribbean Sea.

Crossbows are weapons consisting of bows fixed on wooden sticks with grooves to guide a projectile.

Pikes are long spears.

A tribute is a tax or a payment, often made as a sign of dependence.

groups. Women also grew crops of pineapples, cassavas, and sweet potatoes, while men hunted and gathered seafood.

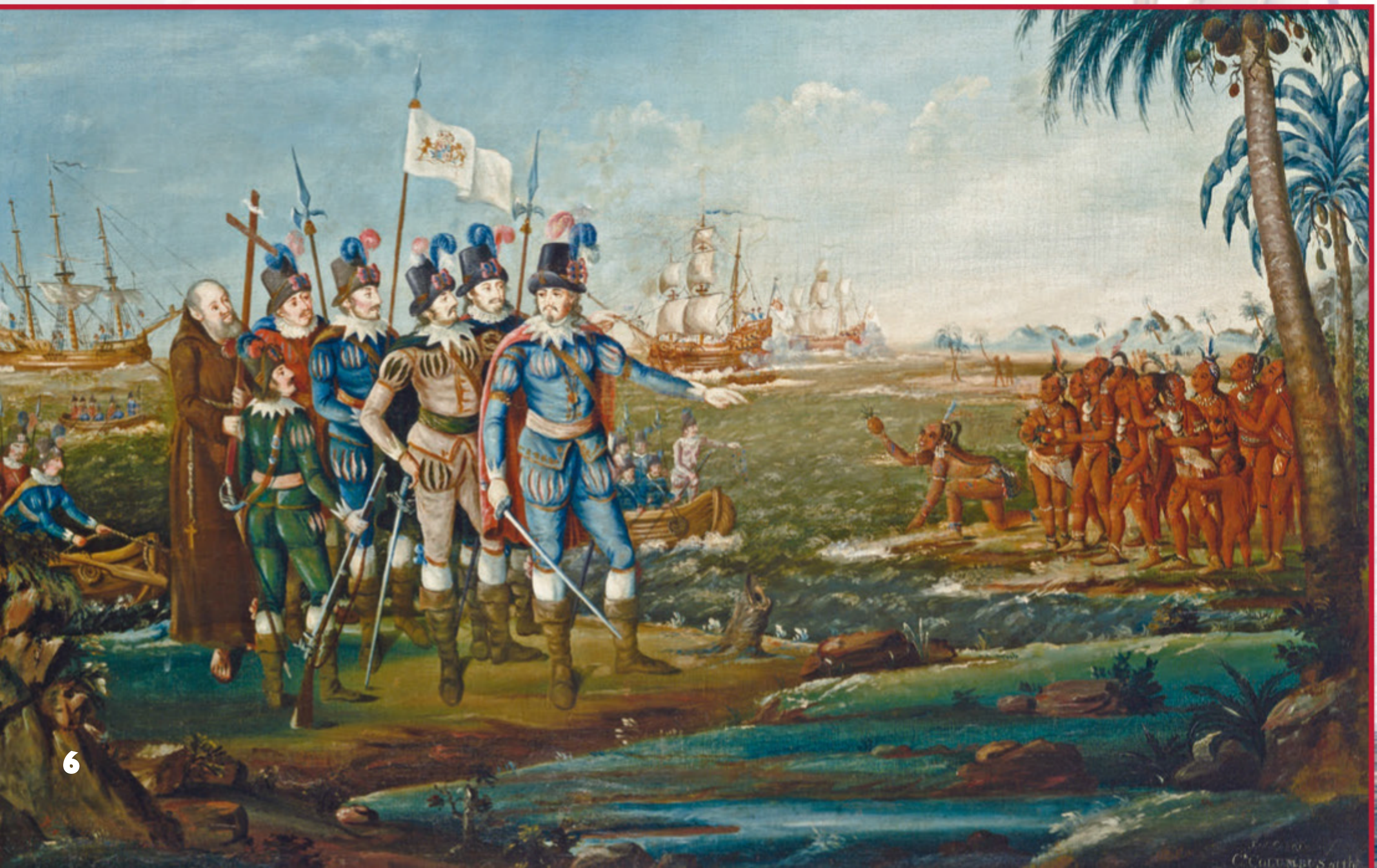
Columbus noted in his journal that the Taino "... are the best people in the world, and above all, the gentlest." Assuming they had no religion of their own, Columbus declared that "they would easily be made into Christians." Roman Catholicism was the official religion in Spain, and Spain's rulers hoped to spread their religion to their colonies. Columbus also made a darker observation. With little effort, he thought, "All the inhabitants could be taken away to Spain, or made slaves on the island."

Everywhere Columbus explored, he asked where he might find gold. The Taino people freely gave the bits of gold that they wore to the Spaniards. But it wasn't until Columbus landed on present-day Hispaniola that the Spanish found quantities of the precious metal. That discovery led to the destruction of the Taino people and their way of life throughout the West Indies.

Hispaniola became a major Spanish settlement. Under Columbus's rule as colonial governor from 1492 to 1499, soldiers hunted down and captured Taino people. More than 500 of them were loaded onto ships and sent to Spain to be sold as slaves. In March 1495, the Taino began to organize a full-scale revolt. Tens of thousands of Indigenous fighters assembled in a central valley. But they were no match for the 200 Spanish soldiers sent to face them. The Spanish fought with crossbows, guns, pikes, and swords. They also released vicious dogs and attacked while riding on horses. The Taino were armed only with primitive weapons. They had never seen horses. They fled in fear.

Columbus demanded a tribute of gold. People who failed to deliver were punished by having their hands chopped off or their ears or noses cropped. Columbus also imposed

Painted in the early 1800s, this scene captures the European view of Christopher Columbus's landing in the Americas in 1492.



the Spanish Crown's *encomienda* labor system. It rewarded Spanish conquistadors with allotments of land. The Spanish also controlled the Taino people and villages on that land. They were supposed to take into account the welfare of the laborers and to protect them, but the system turned into a form of enslavement for the Taino people.

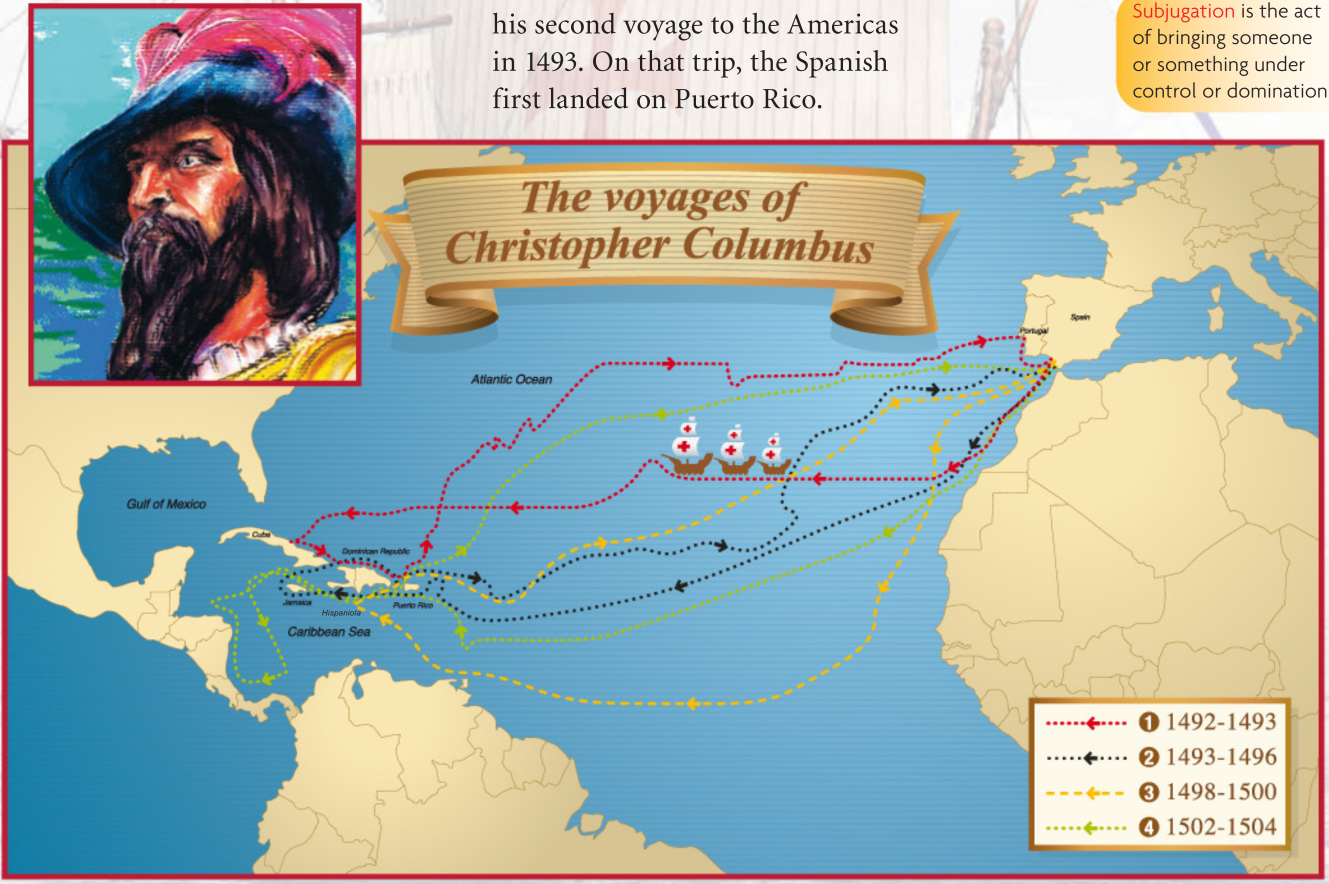
Meanwhile, the Spanish introduced cattle, pigs, and horses. Those animals roamed freely on islands where the Spanish settled. The animals trampled the fertile mounds of earth where Taino people planted their crops. The disruption to Taino agriculture caused many people to starve. To escape the brutality, Taino families fled into the hills or to neighboring islands.

Columbus's subjugation of the Taino people opened the door for the conquistadors who followed. Among them was Juan Ponce de León. He sailed with Columbus on his second voyage to the Americas in 1493. On that trip, the Spanish first landed on Puerto Rico.

The different groups that contributed to Puerto Rican culture are portrayed as statues in a plaza: a Spanish conquistador, an enslaved African, a Taino native, and a Puerto Rican farmer.

Subjugation is the act of bringing someone or something under control or domination.

After joining Columbus on his second journey to the Americas, Juan Ponce de León became the first Spanish governor of Puerto Rico.


The voyages of Christopher Columbus
Atlantic Ocean
Portugal
Spain
Gulf of Mexico
Cuba
Dominican Republic
Jamaica
Hispaniola
Puerto Rico
Caribbean Sea
❶ 1492-1493
❷ 1493-1496
❸ 1498-1500
❹ 1502-1504

FAST FACT

Hispaniola's native population—estimated at 1 million people when Christopher Columbus arrived—fell to about 30,000 by 1514.

Today, Puerto Ricans remember and preserve their Taino history.

Ponce de León explored Puerto Rico in 1508. He was named the island's governor and founded the first Spanish settlement at Caparra near present-day San Juan. He established the first mining operation on Puerto Rico and forced the Taino people to mine for gold. He later became the first known European to explore Florida. But his attempts to colonize it failed. He was mortally wounded in 1521 after Florida's native Calusa people drove away the Spanish settlers.

Contact with the Spanish left the Taino people weakened by rebellion, overwork, and hunger. The Spanish also carried diseases from Europe to the Americas against which the Taino people had no immunity. Tens of thousands of Indigenous people died from exposure to measles, influenza, typhus, and later, smallpox. On Puerto Rico, the original Taino population of about 30,000 people dropped to less than 2,000 by 1530.

Spain's conquest of the West Indies seemed complete by the mid-1500s. At that time, Spanish records noted that nearly all the Taino people had been killed. But today, residents of some Caribbean islands—most notably in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic—claim Taino heritage. More than half of Puerto Rico's population is believed to have Taino mitochondrial DNA. Children are taught Taino history in school. Efforts continue to reestablish and celebrate the Caribbean's original Taino culture. ☆

Mitochondrial DNA describes genetic material found not in the nucleus but rather in structures within cells that produce energy that cells can use.

Craig Gingold contributed to this article.

Puerto Rico is Spanish for "rich port." The island earned that name after gold was discovered in its soil and streams in 1508. Spain removed an annual average of one ton of gold from Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico before the supply gave out. Many of Puerto Rico's gold deposits were depleted by the mid-1500s, but modern technology has made mining an industry once again.

SAN JUAN

Puerto Rico's Caribbean Jewel

by Christine Graf

When the Spanish settled San Juan in 1521, they quickly recognized the value of Puerto Rico's capital city. It became an important port, outpost, and gateway for exploration of the Americas. Spain's enemies, primarily the British and the Dutch, coveted its strategic military location. Its excellent harbor was one of the largest and best in the Caribbean. To the Spanish, San Juan was one of the most valuable jewels in their empire. They went to great lengths to protect it. The city's defenses during Spanish colonial rule covered 250 acres and left just 62 acres for other buildings.

Coveted means greatly desired.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1493, Christopher Columbus named the island of Puerto Rico *San Juan Bautista* (St. John the Baptist). Meanwhile, the city of San Juan originally was named *Puerto Rico* (Rich Port). The names were switched in 1520, possibly due to a cartographer's error. *Puerto Rico* became the name of the island, and the island's largest city and famous port became known as *San Juan*.

First Fortress

To protect San Juan from foreign enemies and Indigenous Carib people, Spain's King Charles V ordered the construction of La Fortaleza. Begun in 1533, it was San Juan's first fortified building. But its location proved inadequate to guard the entrance to San Juan's harbor. It was captured twice—by the British in 1598 and by the Dutch in 1625. It eventually was converted to other uses. It has been used as an arsenal and as a prison. Today, it serves as the governor's residence. It is the oldest executive mansion in continuous use in the Americas.

Harbor Outpost

Construction on another fort began in 1539 and lasted until 1786. The Castillo de San Felipe del Morro was built on the tip of the point on San Juan Bay. El Morro was perfectly situated to protect San Juan's port. It began with a simple tower, but it evolved into a massive state-of-the-art example of European military architecture. Its 18-foot-thick walls rise 140 feet above the sea. It thwarted countless sea attacks by pirates, privateers, and foreign enemies.

The fort finally met its match during the Spanish-American War in 1898. A U.S. naval bombardment significantly damaged it before Spain ceded ownership of Puerto Rico to the United States. The U.S. Army repaired El Morro and used it as Fort Brooke, an active military base. It served as an outpost during World War I (1914–1918) and as an observation bunker during World War II (1939–1945). Currently, the fort is the most visited historic site in Puerto Rico.

Ceded means surrendered possession of something.

A bunker is a defensive, often underground military fortification.

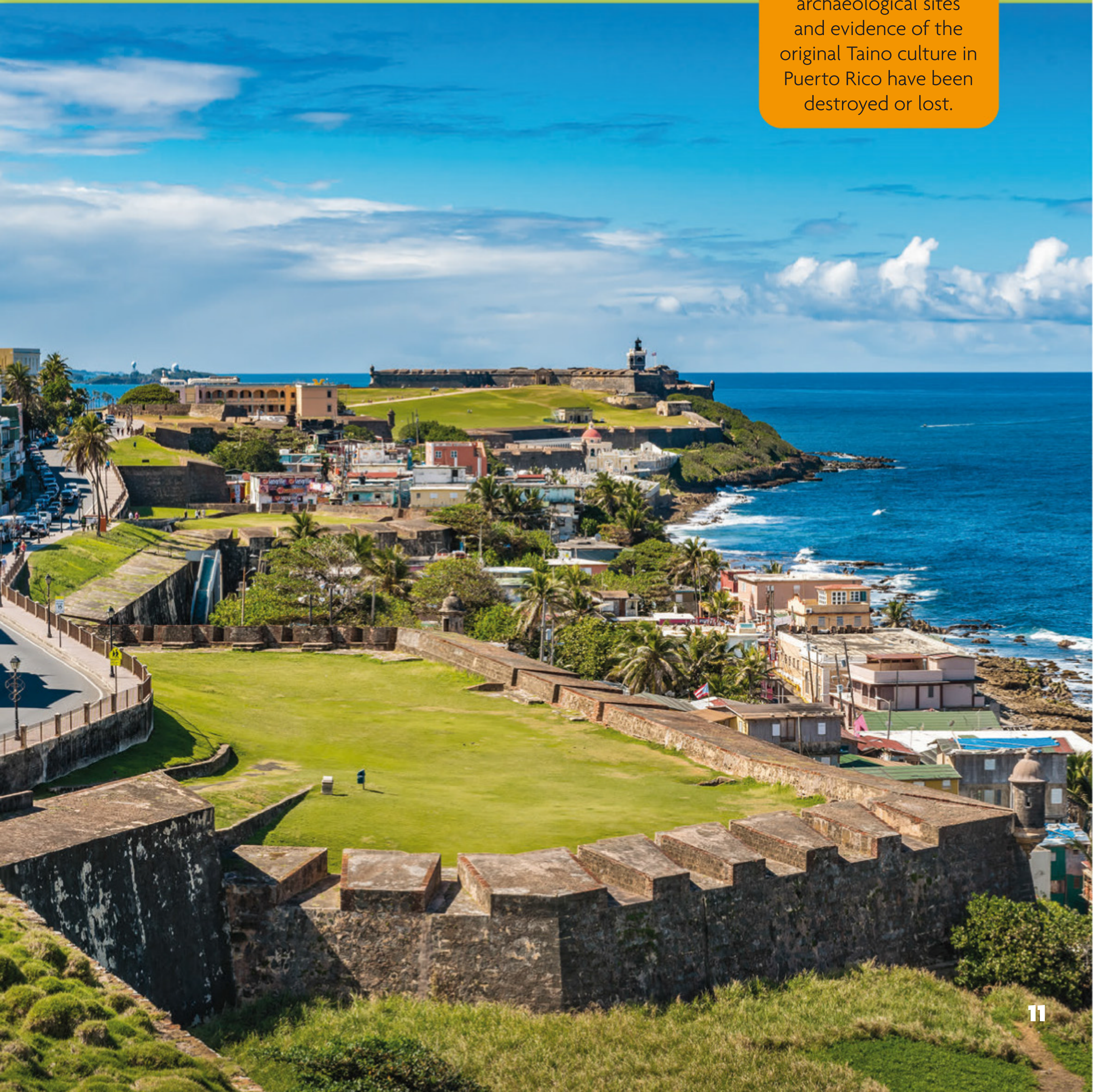
Highly Functional Fort

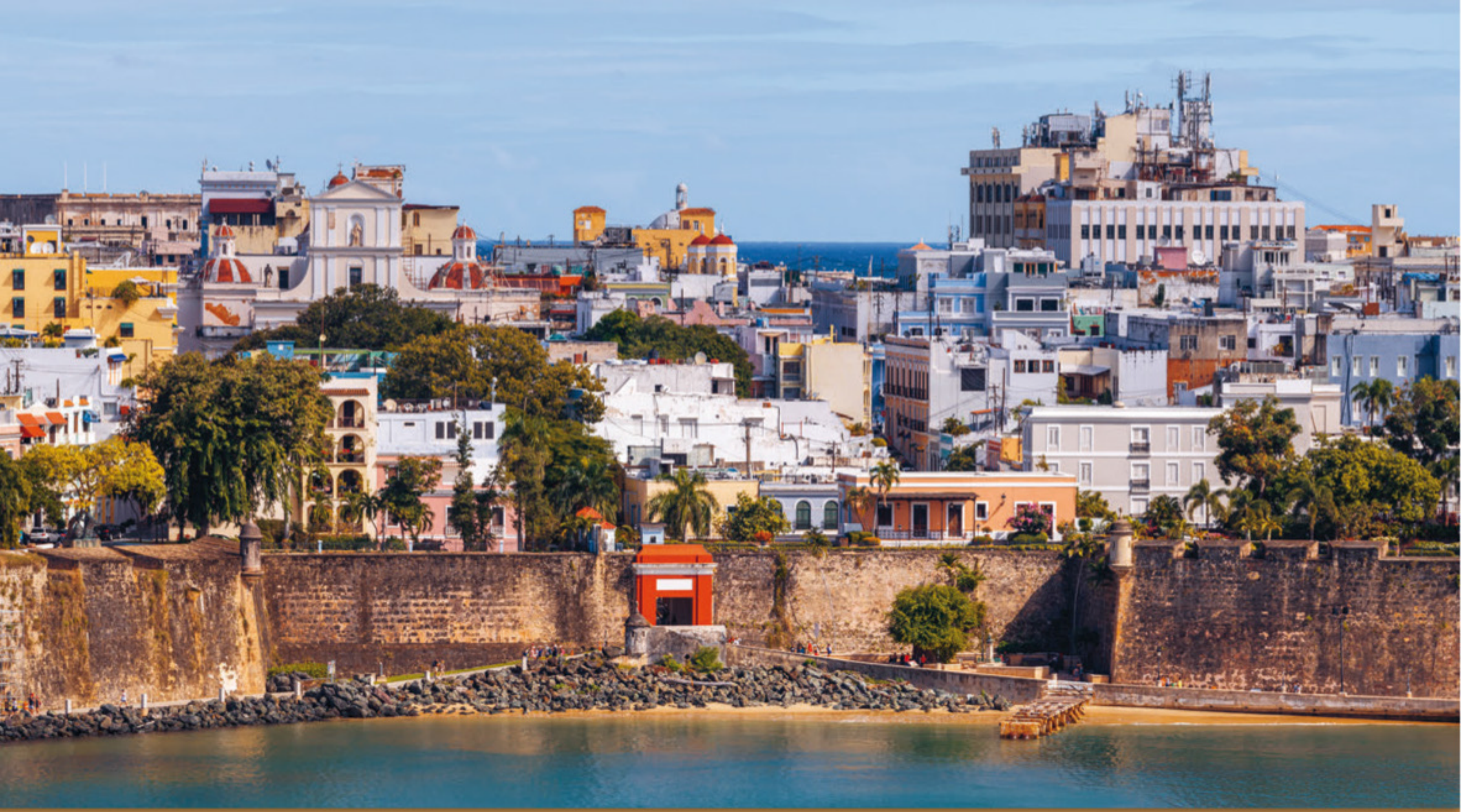
While El Morro was built to protect San Juan from sea invasions, the Castillo de San Cristóbal was built to protect it from land invasions. Construction began in 1634, after El Morro was captured in a Dutch land invasion. (The Dutch burned the city before abandoning it in 1625.) The elaborate fort covers 27 acres and consists of five modular units. Each unit could function independently if any of the others were captured. The units were connected by moats and a series of tunnels that allowed troops to relocate quickly to different areas of the fort.

Modular means small, independent parts.

FAST FACT

Most of the archaeological sites and evidence of the original Taino culture in Puerto Rico have been destroyed or lost.





Walled-In Protection

Also in 1634, the Spanish took their defensive efforts a step further. They began construction of an enormous wall that surrounded the city. La Muralla helped protect the tip of land on which present-day Old San Juan is located from land attacks. The wall took 150 years to build. Much of the work was done by enslaved laborers. The completed wall measured 3.4 miles and included six entry gates. The San Juan Gate (ABOVE) was the main gate and was locked at sundown. It is the only gate still standing. At the turn of the 20th century, some sections of La Muralla were demolished so that the city could expand.

FAST FACT

In 1949, the United States designated San Juan's historic fortifications as a National Historic Site. They are maintained by the National Park Service. In 1983, they were named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Special Sites

Most historic Spanish travelers went directly to the Catedral de San Juan Bautista (RIGHT) to give thanks to God for their safe ocean voyage. Construction of the cathedral began in 1521. It is one of the city's oldest structures. The cathedral still conducts regular masses and houses the tomb of Juan Ponce de León.

Construction of Casa Blanca also began in 1521. It was built to be Ponce de León's residence. He died before moving into the home, but his descendants resided there for 200 years. It is filled with artifacts from the 1500s and 1600s. The museum is one of many examples of Spanish colonial architecture found throughout San Juan. The city is home to an estimated 400 structures of historic value. Most of the buildings have been painstakingly restored.

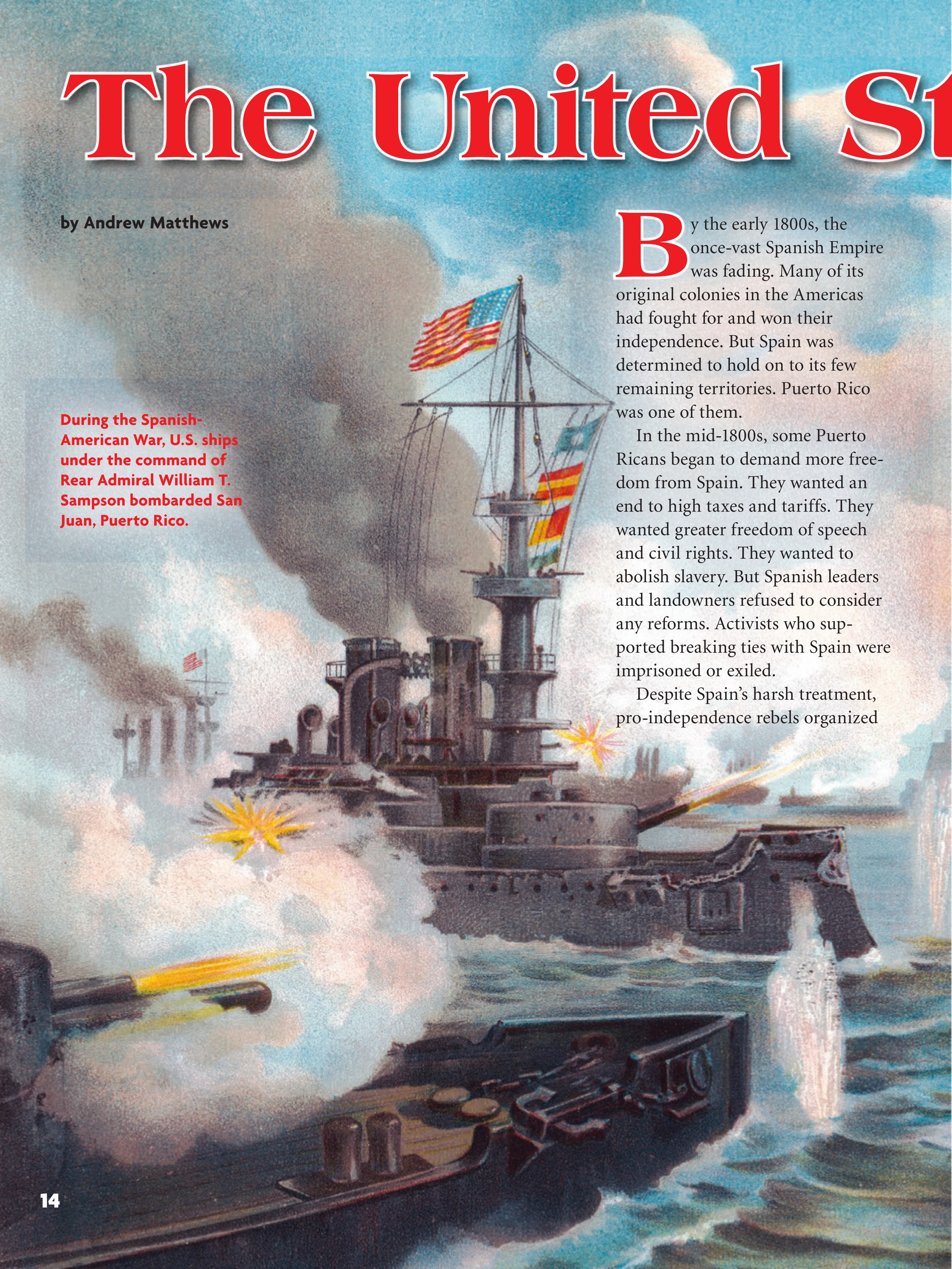
Modern Port City

Today, more than three quarters of Puerto Rico's nearly 3 million residents live and work in and around San Juan. It is a bustling capital city and a major shipping center. Its port is one of the busiest in the Caribbean. It is home to numerous industries including petroleum refining, sugar refining, brewing and distilling, manufacturing, finance, and pharmaceuticals.

With its residential neighborhoods and beach resorts, the city also has evolved into the most popular tourist destination in the Caribbean. Its many plazas have become places to gather for festivals, concerts, and other events. Old San Juan remains famous for its natural beauty and fascinating history. Anyone who travels the city's narrow cobblestone streets—built hundreds of years ago with blue adoquín paving stones from Spain—can find that beauty and history around every corner. ☆

The United St

by Andrew Matthews



During the Spanish-American War, U.S. ships under the command of Rear Admiral William T. Sampson bombarded San Juan, Puerto Rico.

By the early 1800s, the once-vast Spanish Empire was fading. Many of its original colonies in the Americas had fought for and won their independence. But Spain was determined to hold on to its few remaining territories. Puerto Rico was one of them.

In the mid-1800s, some Puerto Ricans began to demand more freedom from Spain. They wanted an end to high taxes and tariffs. They wanted greater freedom of speech and civil rights. They wanted to abolish slavery. But Spanish leaders and landowners refused to consider any reforms. Activists who supported breaking ties with Spain were imprisoned or exiled.

Despite Spain's harsh treatment, pro-independence rebels organized

tates Steps In

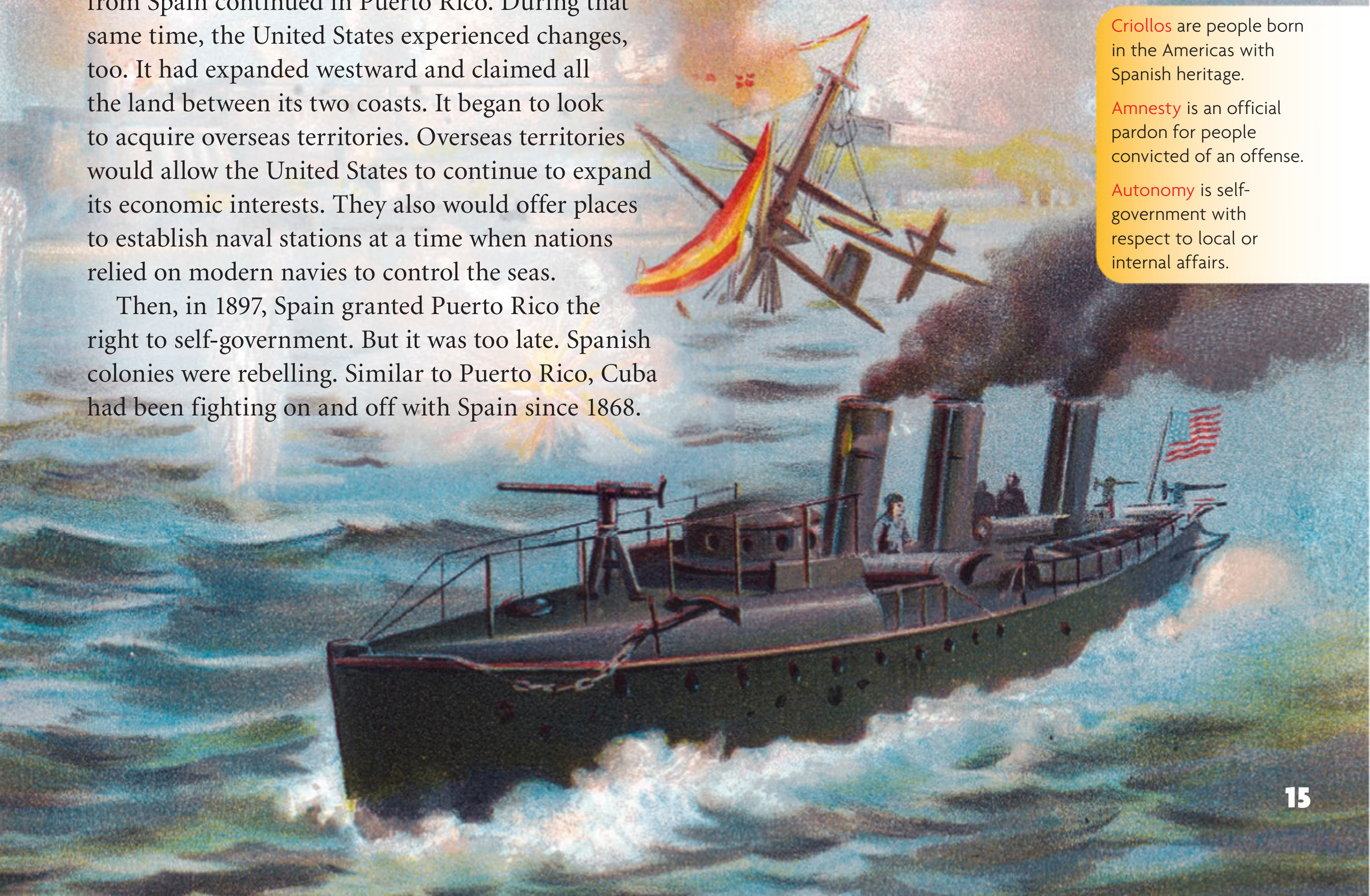
an armed rebellion. The movement brought together many criollos, who had been born in Puerto Rico and who had developed a sense of national identity with the island. On September 23, 1868, the rebels seized the city of Lares. Although initially successful, the rebels were poorly armed and poorly trained. The Spanish military outmaneuvered them and captured more than 400 of them. But instead of executing the rebels, the Spanish governor offered them amnesty.

In the following years, Puerto Rico was given representation in Spain's parliament. Spain also freed enslaved people who were 60 years old or older. In 1873, a new republican government in Spain abolished slavery on the island. National political parties emerged. But in 1874, the Spanish monarchy returned to power. Reforms in Puerto Rico stalled.

Over the next two decades, calls for independence from Spain continued in Puerto Rico. During that same time, the United States experienced changes, too. It had expanded westward and claimed all the land between its two coasts. It began to look to acquire overseas territories. Overseas territories would allow the United States to continue to expand its economic interests. They also would offer places to establish naval stations at a time when nations relied on modern navies to control the seas.

Then, in 1897, Spain granted Puerto Rico the right to self-government. But it was too late. Spanish colonies were rebelling. Similar to Puerto Rico, Cuba had been fighting on and off with Spain since 1868. U.S. businesses had invested heavily in that island. Americans were concerned about Spain's inability to address the growing violence. During the Cuban War of Independence (1895–1898), the United States sent a battleship to Cuba's Havana Harbor to protect U.S. interests. The ship's sudden explosion—and U.S. newspapers' sensational coverage that blamed Spain without proof—led the United States to declare war on Spain in April 1898.

Spain was no match for the United States in the Spanish-American War. The conflict was over in less than four months. Spain ceded Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States. By mid-October, the last Spanish troops left Puerto Rico. Centuries as a Spanish possession ended. But instead of continuing its newly acquired autonomy, Puerto Rico began the new century as a U.S. territory. ☆



Criollos are people born in the Americas with Spanish heritage.

Amnesty is an official pardon for people convicted of an offense.

Autonomy is self-government with respect to local or internal affairs.

Weighing in on STATEHOOD

☐ Independence
☐ Statehood
☐ Status Quo

by Christine Graf and Elizabeth Howard

Independence, statehood, or status quo? Puerto Ricans have tried to address that question—and their relationship with the United States—for more than 100 years. The island has held six referendums about the issue in the second half of the 20th century. None of those votes led to any permanent changes. But votes by Puerto Ricans alone can't change the island's status. Since Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, it's up to the U.S. Congress to pass a statute to change the situation.

Status quo means the existing conditions.

Referendums are submissions of proposed public measures to a direct popular vote.

A statute is a law enacted by a legislature.

An Unincorporated Territory

The United States claimed Puerto Rico after defeating Spain in the Spanish-American War in 1898. It designated Puerto Rico as an unincorporated territory. The United States used that designation to acquire overseas territories without providing a clear path to statehood for them.

Initially, the U.S. military controlled Puerto Rico. But in 1900, the U.S. Congress passed the Foraker Act. It set up a "temporary civilian government," which gave Puerto Rico some autonomy. Puerto Ricans elected representatives to a one-house legislative assembly. They also elected a non-voting resident commissioner with limited powers to represent Puerto Rico's interests in the U.S. Congress. But the U.S. president appointed the territorial governor as well as an executive council. The president also appointed judges to a supreme court. Meanwhile, U.S. federal laws went into effect on the island.

In 1917, the United States passed the Jones-Shafroth Act. Puerto Rico's legislative body was expanded from one house to two houses—a House and a Senate. Both houses were elected by Puerto Ricans. The resident commissioner remained non-voting, but that office was granted more privileges in Congress. But the U.S. president still appointed the governor and more than half of the department heads. And the U.S. president and the governor retained veto power over the Puerto Rican legislature.

The act extended U.S. citizenship at birth to Puerto Ricans. But Puerto Rico remained a territory, so residents could not vote in presidential elections as residents of U.S. states can. The act extended the responsibilities that came with U.S. citizenship, such as registering for a U.S. military draft. About 17,000 Puerto Rican men fought with the United States in World War I (1914–1918).

Supporters of Puerto Rican independence carry a sign that reads "Neither (Financial Oversight and Management) Board, Nor Colony. Independence!"

Ni junta · Ni colonia
INDEPENDENCIA
¡ya!

The Independence Movement

In the 1930s, a worldwide economic collapse combined with dissatisfaction about its political status led Puerto Rico to push for independence from the United States. Members of the independence movement called for Puerto Rican sovereignty. They staged a peaceful island-wide agricultural strike in 1935. The U.S. government responded by surveilling, harassing, and imprisoning the movement's leaders. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) later admitted that it conducted a program that caused "tremendous destruction to many people."

In 1948, Puerto Rico's legislature passed a "Gag Law." The law made it illegal for people to display the Puerto Rican flag or sing patriotic songs. Publicly supporting independence in any way was forbidden. Members of the independence movement felt as if all legal avenues for expressing support for their cause had been closed to them. (In 1957, the "Gag Law" was declared unconstitutional and a violation of freedom of speech.)

The movement organized an armed rebellion in Puerto Rico in 1950. The United States ordered air strikes and deployed National Guard troops

Sovereignty is the authority to govern oneself.

Statehood supporters wave U.S. flags at a celebratory rally in June 2017.

to suppress it. The movement's violent activities also spread to the United States. Two armed Puerto Rican nationalists attempted to assassinate President Harry S. Truman in 1950. Four years later, independence supporters shot and wounded five members of the U.S. House of Representatives. In the years that followed, militant independence groups claimed responsibility for at least 70 bombings in the United States. The bombings caused five deaths and numerous injuries. They resulted in millions of dollars' worth of property damage. Many nationalists were arrested and imprisoned.

A Commonwealth

Support for Puerto Rico's independence faded after Puerto Rico was granted commonwealth status in 1952. Puerto Ricans wrote and ratified their own constitution and organized a republican government. As a commonwealth, Puerto Ricans enjoy greater autonomy on local matters. Much of the oversight once held by the U.S. president has been eliminated. Puerto Ricans elect their own officials—they had begun electing their governor in 1948. The governor selects his cabinet and department heads. But the United States retains oversight on issues related to immigration, foreign policy and trade, and military defense. The U.S. government also still holds veto power over any Puerto Rican legislation. Puerto Ricans remain U.S. citizens, and the island remains a territory.

It's Complicated

The issue of what is best for the people of Puerto Rico is complicated. Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens for more than 100 years, but many Puerto Ricans view their island as a nation. They consider themselves Puerto Ricans, not Americans.

In 2014, Puerto Rico faced a financial crisis. The United States had provided tax breaks to companies to encourage them to locate businesses in Puerto Rico. But the tax breaks expired, and companies elected not to remain there. It led to an economic decline on the island. The situation spiraled until Puerto Rico found itself more than $70 billion in debt.

The territorial government ultimately filed for bankruptcy and has been working toward decreasing its debt. But drastic cuts were made to education, health care, and retirement pensions. Nearly half of Puerto Ricans live in poverty. Although Puerto Ricans have access to U.S. social programs, such as

Militant describes a fighting or aggressive group or person.

A commonwealth is a self-governing autonomous political unit freely associated with another country.

welfare, food stamps, and college grants, they do not receive the same government benefits as those living in the United States. Migration to the United States is at record levels due to declining quality of life on the island. As U.S. citizens, Puerto Ricans can live in the United States and travel freely back and forth to Puerto Rico. Today, more Puerto Ricans live on the U.S. mainland than live on the island.

The Future

Independence would allow Puerto Ricans to control their own political, economic, and social issues. But it would mean the loss of U.S. citizenship. It also would end U.S. military and financial support.

Statehood would give Puerto Ricans voting representatives—and more of them—in Washington, D.C. It would mean receiving an additional $10 billion a year in federal funding from the U.S. government. A large portion of the money would go to Puerto Rico's poor, elderly, and disabled. But statehood would require Puerto Rican residents to pay a federal income tax. It also might result in a loss of national heritage.

The most recent referendums in 2017 and 2020 supported statehood. But the voter turnout was low. Should the will of the Puerto Rican people be considered by Congress? Could change be on the horizon for the island? Only time will tell. ☆

FAST FACT

In 1946, Jesús T. Piñero became the first and only appointed governor of Puerto Rico who was a native Puerto Rican.

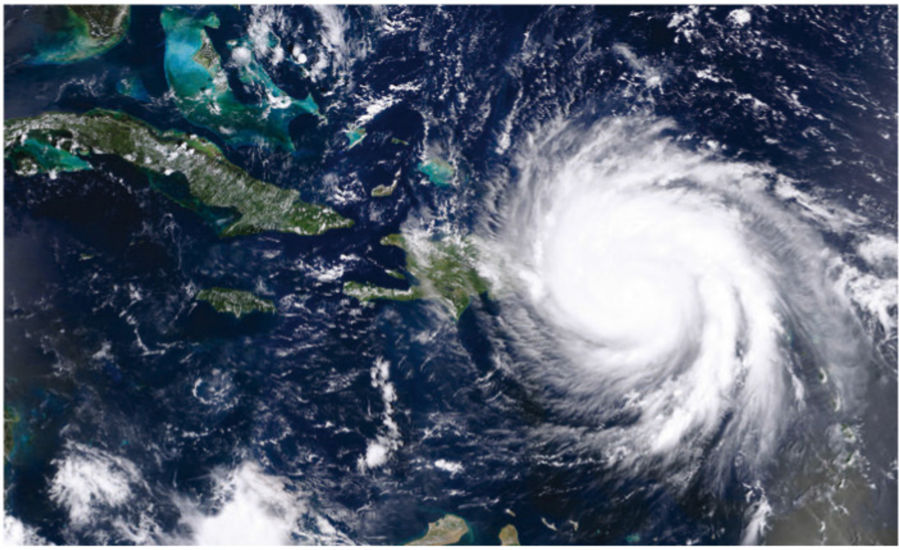
STATEHOOD FOR PUERTO RICO!
UNINCORPORATED TERRITORY IS RACIAL SEGREGATION END IT NOW!
PUERTO RICO 51
We The Puerto Rican People Demand Equality
RESPECT PUERTO RICO'S STATEHOOD VOTE!
www.puertoricostatehoodaction.net

Following the 2020 referendum, U.S. Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz (D-CA) backed legislation to make Puerto Rico the 51st state.

AND THEN CAME MARIA

For islands in the Caribbean Sea, hurricanes bring everything from uncertainty to devastating destruction. In the 20th century, severe storms swept through Puerto Rico once or twice a decade. But in the 2010s, 22 major storms hit Puerto Rico. The storms—combining wind, rain, and storm surges—left people homeless, without electricity, and without water. They washed away roads and destroyed crops and land. Rebuilding after each disaster is challenging.

On September 20, 2017, Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico with the near strength of a Category 5 storm. The National Weather Service describes Category 4 and 5 hurricanes as bringing "catastrophic damage. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of [an] area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months."



A satellite image captures Hurricane Maria's path right over Puerto Rico in 2017.

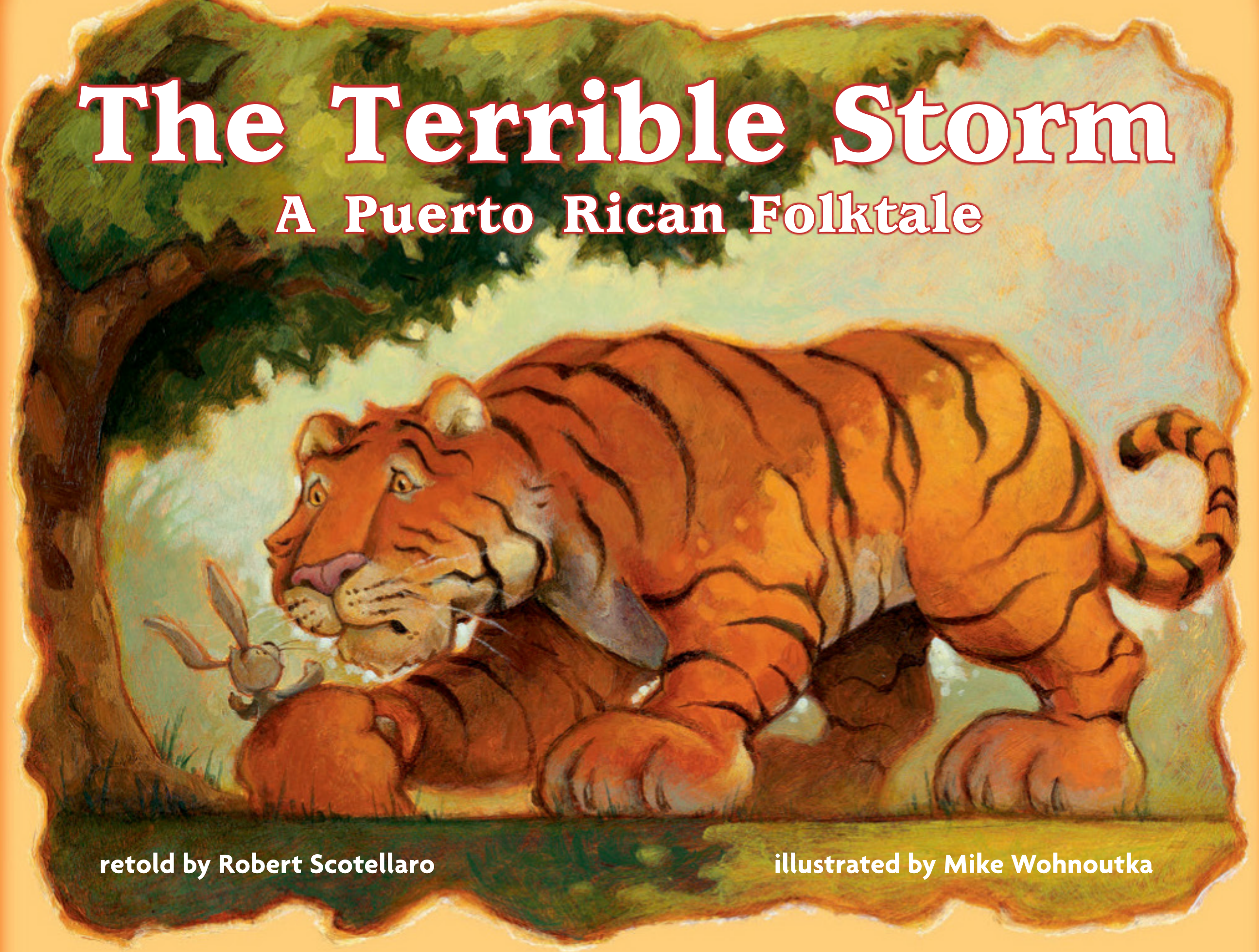
The damage to the island was severe.

Nearly 3,000 people died in Puerto Rico. Many buildings were destroyed. Most of the island's agriculture was wiped out. It took an entire year before the power grid was restored to everyone. The hurricane left behind an estimated $90 billion in damages.

The U.S. government's response to the need for humanitarian aid was inadequate. The prolonged suffering of residents post-hurricane combined with the island's decade-long economic depression sparked major protests in Puerto Rico in 2019. Many Puerto Ricans began demonstrating for change and the right to self-determination. Perhaps the circumstances after Maria will motivate a reevaluation of the island's territorial status. **—E.H.**

The Terrible Storm

A Puerto Rican Folktale



retold by Robert Scotellaro

illustrated by Mike Wohnoutka

It was too hot for hopping about. Rabbit decided to sit in the shade of a mango tree instead. He was just settling down for a nap when Tiger sprang from behind and grabbed him.

“I’ve got you now!” growled Tiger. “And I’ve brought some rope. I’m tying you to this tree so you won’t use those quick feet of yours to get away. Later, I’ll have you for my supper.”

“I don’t think that’s a good idea,” exclaimed Rabbit. “In fact, it would be a big mistake.”

“What are you saying, Rabbit?” Tiger tilted his head suspiciously.

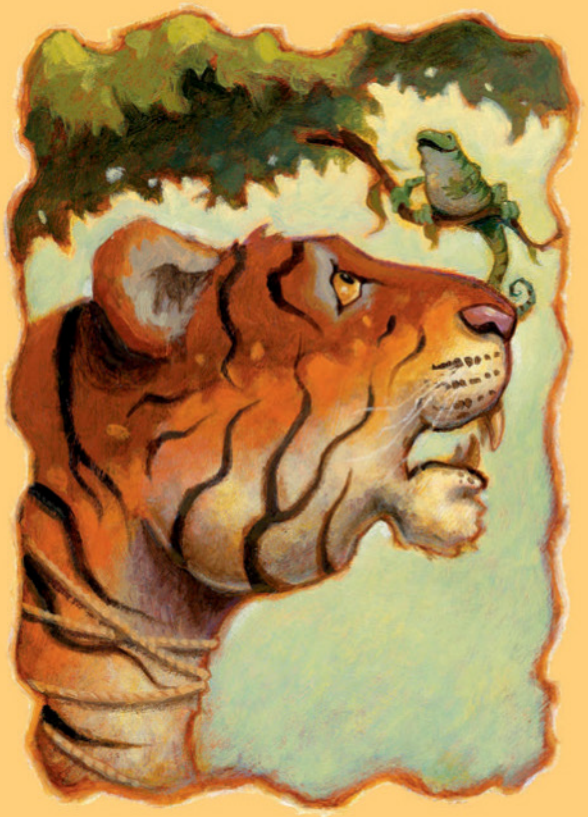
“Don’t you know anything?” Rabbit asked, looking surprised. “Everyone’s talking about it!”

“About what?” demanded Tiger.

“Why, the terrible storm that’s coming,” said Rabbit. “It’ll be here any minute!”

Tiger’s eyes widened.

“You’re big,” continued Rabbit, “but that won’t make any difference. This storm is going to have very strong winds, the kind that can blow even a tiger away like a leaf.”



Now, Tiger was not afraid of many things, but he was afraid of storms. He began to shake. "What can I do?" he asked. "I don't want to blow away!"

"I'll help you," offered Rabbit. "Stand here, and I'll tie you to this tree with the rope you brought. Then you'll be safe, and the wind won't blow you away."

"Do it quickly!" cried Tiger.

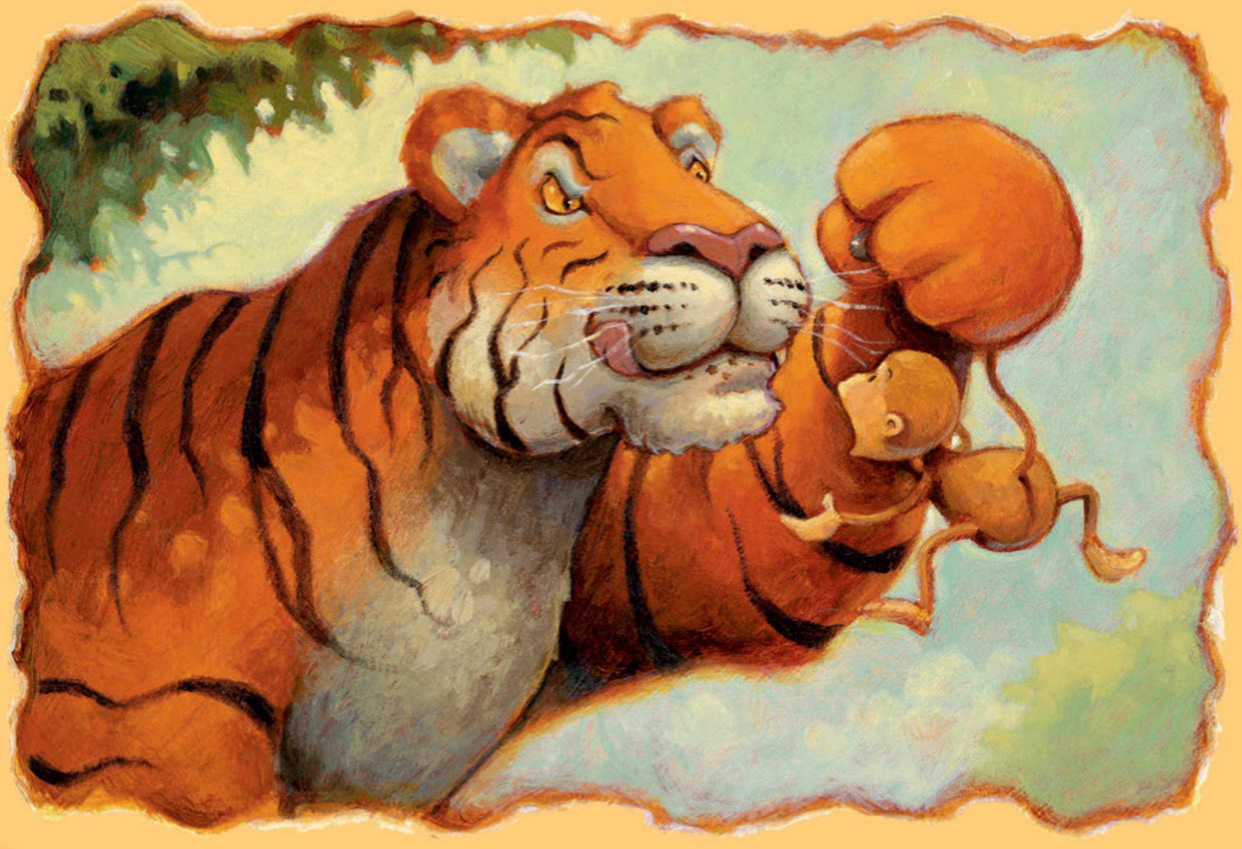
Rabbit tied Tiger to the tree. He wrapped the rope around and around and then made three tight knots. "There," said Rabbit. "That should do it." And he scurried off to hide in a thornbush and watch.

Soon Lizard came by. He saw Tiger and chuckled. "Why are you all tied up?" he asked.

"To keep the storm from blowing me away, of course," answered Tiger. "Don't you know anything?"

"What storm?" asked Lizard.

"The terrible one that's coming any minute," said Tiger.



Lizard shook his head from side to side. "There's no storm coming, Tiger. The sun must have baked your brain!" He laughed and crawled off.

Tiger growled. He knew he had been tricked. He was about to give his loudest roar, when Monkey climbed down from a nearby tree.

"Hi, Monkey," said Tiger, in a friendly voice. "Would you please untie me?"

Monkey thought for a moment. "If I do," she answered cautiously, "will you promise not to eat me?"

"Why, of course," purred Tiger. "You can be sure of it."

"Very well then," agreed Monkey, and she untied all the knots.

The moment Tiger was loose, he grabbed Monkey. "Foolish Monkey," he said, "don't you know tigers never keep their promises? Now I will eat you!"

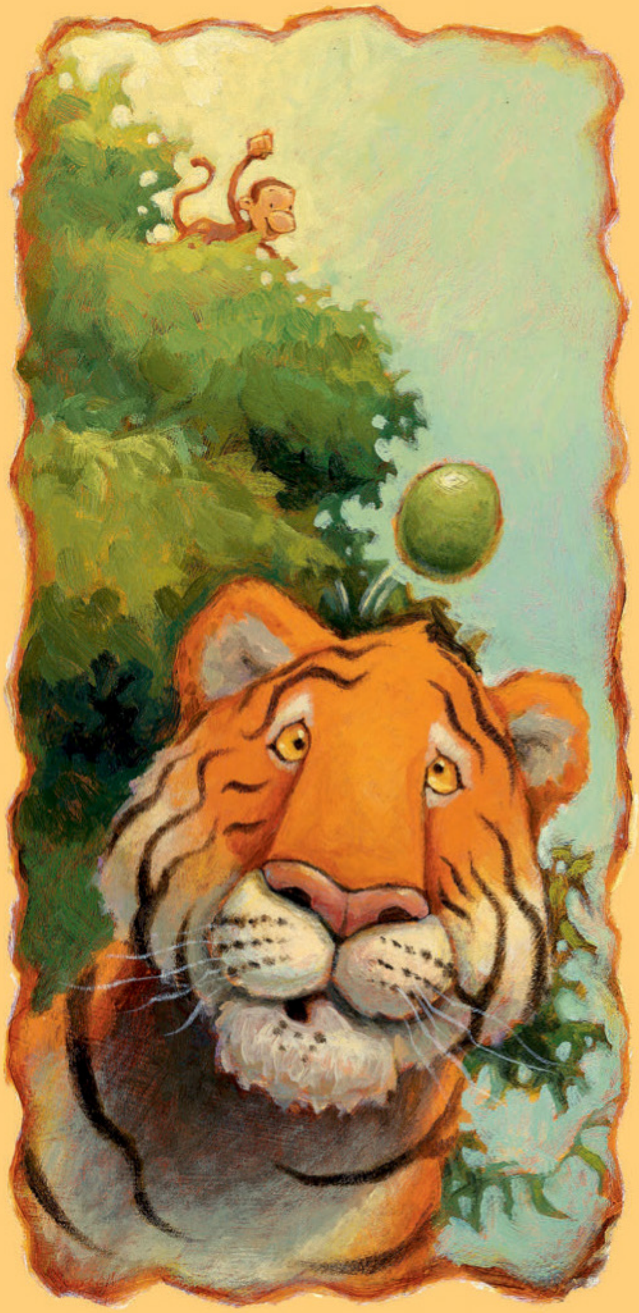
"Hey, Tiger," shouted Rabbit from his hiding place. "That's no way to eat a monkey. Don't you know anything?"

"Wha . . . ?" said Tiger.

"That's no way for a big, strong tiger like you!" Rabbit went on. "Here's how to do it: First you open your mouth real wide. You toss Monkey up in the air. Then you swallow her in one gulp. That's what a true tiger would do!"

Tiger scratched his head and thought for a moment. He decided he liked Rabbit's fancy way, for he was indeed a true tiger. So he opened his mouth wide and tossed Monkey way up in the air.

But Monkey did not come back down. She grabbed a branch instead and climbed high into the tree. The only thing that came back down was a big mango, which bonked Tiger on the head. ☆

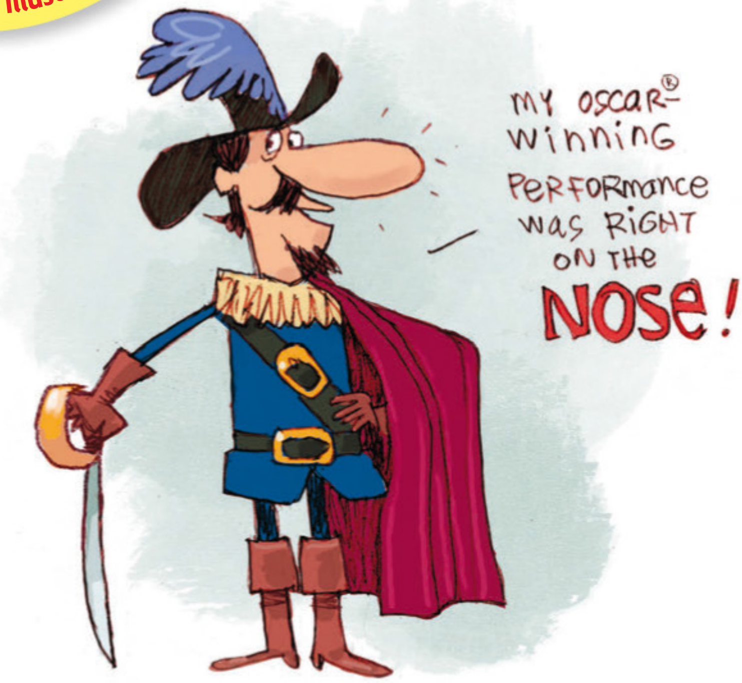


Editor's Note: Rabbit and Tiger are the subject of many trickster tales in Puerto Rico. Those tales follow a similar format. Tiger usually catches and threatens to eat Rabbit, while Rabbit always outsmarts Tiger and avoids being eaten. In some cases, Rabbit helps other small creatures escape Tiger's capture, too. These trickster tales demonstrate how a creature who is small but wise and uses his head is better off than a creature who is strong and mean and wishes to harm others. But just to avoid any confusion, no tigers actually live in the wild in Puerto Rico!

DID YOU KNOW ?

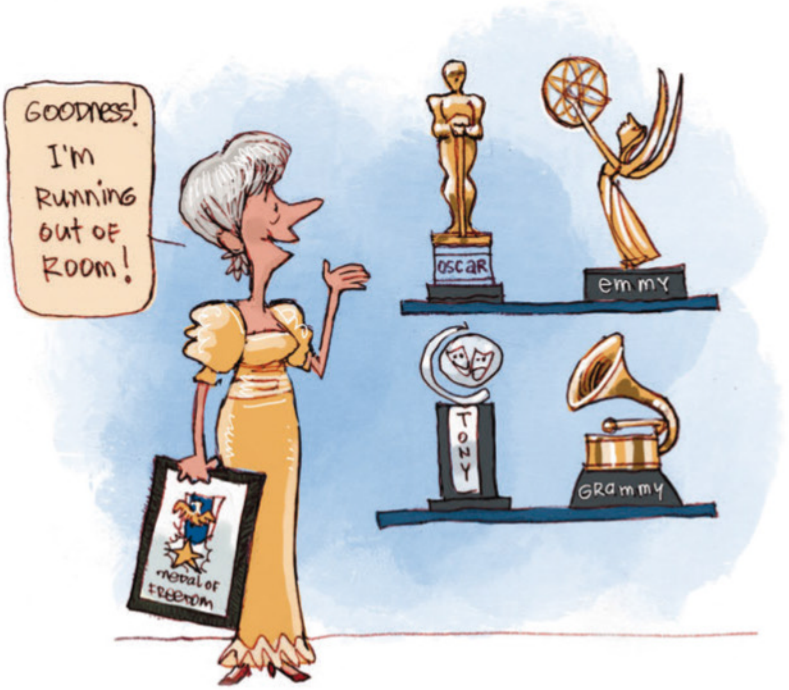
illustrated by Chris Ware

The most famous American with Puerto Rican heritage may be baseball player Roberto Clemente (see page 31), but here are a few other notable people.

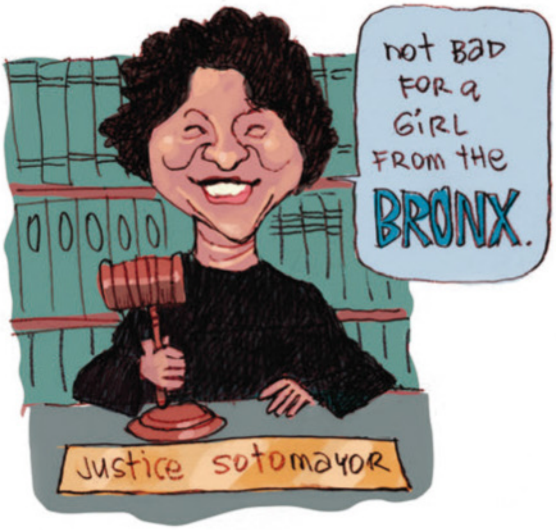

My Oscar® winning performance was right on the NOSE!

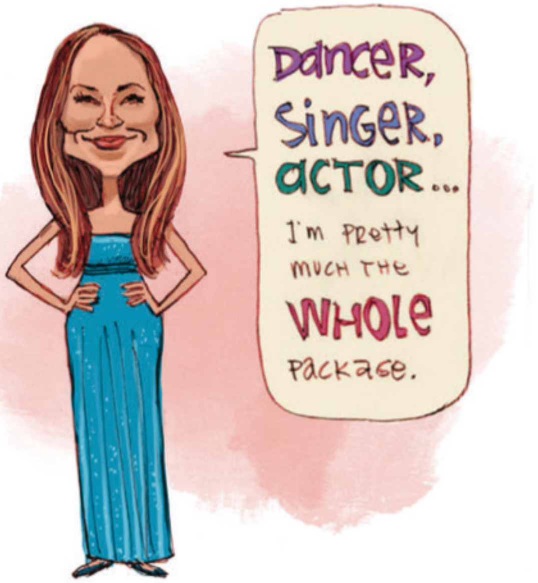
José Ferrer was born in Puerto Rico in 1912. His career in Hollywood lasted 60 years. He won the first Best Actor Tony Award in 1947 for his role in the stage production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. He also starred in a 1950 film version, for which he won the Best Actor Academy Award.

Rita Moreno was born in Puerto Rico in 1931. She is one of the rare performers who has won awards in the four major U.S. categories: an Oscar (film), an Emmy (television), a Tony (theater or stage), and a Grammy (music). She also was awarded a Presidential Medal of Freedom and a Kennedy Center Honor for her contributions to the arts.


Goodness! I'm running out of room!
Oscar
Emmy
Tony
Grammy
Medal of Freedom

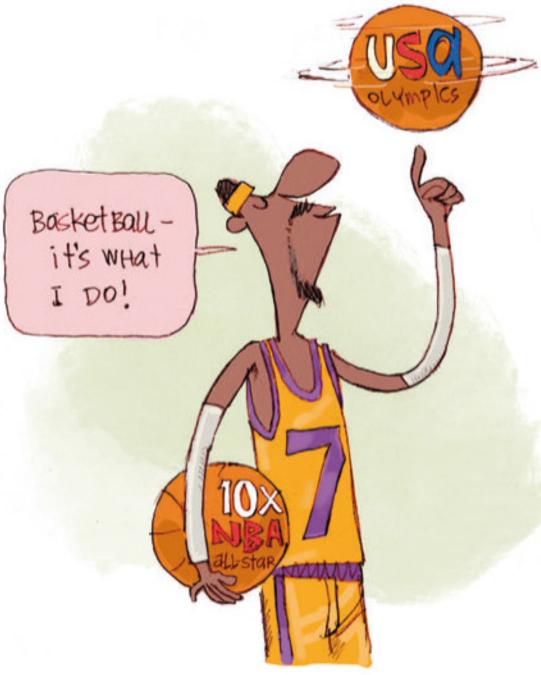
Sonia Sotomayor's parents were born in Puerto Rico. She was born in 1954 in the Bronx, New York. She attended—and excelled at—some of the nation's best schools. In 2009, she made history as the first woman of color (and the third woman overall) to be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court as an associate justice.


not BAD FOR a GiRL FROM the BRONX.
Justice sotomayor


Dancer, Singer, actor... I'm pretty much the WHOLE package.

Both of **Jennifer Lopez**'s parents were born in Puerto Rico before their families immigrated to the United States. Lopez was born in 1969 and grew up in New York City. She decided to pursue a career as a dancer as a teenager—and never looked back. Today, she is famous for singing and acting in addition to dancing and is considered the most influential Latina star.

Carmelo Anthony's Puerto Rican roots come through his father's parents, who shared Indigenous, African, and Spanish heritage. Born in 1984 in Brooklyn, New York, Anthony was selected third overall in the 2003 National Basketball Association (NBA) draft. Over the course of his 20-year NBA career, he has been a 10-time All-Star player, and he has played on four U.S. Olympic teams.


USA olympics
BasketBall - it's wHat I DO!
7
10X NBA all-star

Yum!
Can we dig in?

A FIESTA OF FLAVORS

by Jennifer Buchet

There's no denying that Puerto Rico has a wealth of culture, a captivating past, and an abundance of scenic wonders. It should come as no surprise, then, that the island's food is also rich in fun and flavor. Traditional Borinquén fare has influences from around the world. It is rooted in native tastes. But it was blended with African cooking styles, refined with Spanish flavors, and later zested by Dutch, Irish, Italian, and even Chinese elements. No wonder the cuisine is nicknamed *la cocina criolla*, or "the creole kitchen!"

Puerto Rico's vivid culinary culture began with the earliest inhabitants, the Taino people. Those Indigenous men hunted game such as ducks, guinea pigs, iguanas, turtles, and fish. The women cared for and gathered crops such as taro, yam, corn, and cassava.

In the early 1500s, Spanish colonists brought pork, beef, rice, wheat, olives, tomatoes, and chili peppers. They also cultivated cash crops such as coffee, sugar cane, coconut, and bananas. With the advent of the slave trade, West Africans brought *gandules*, an iconic bean known as pigeon pea. They also introduced the art of frying foods.

Taro is an edible root vegetable grown in the tropics.

FAST FACT

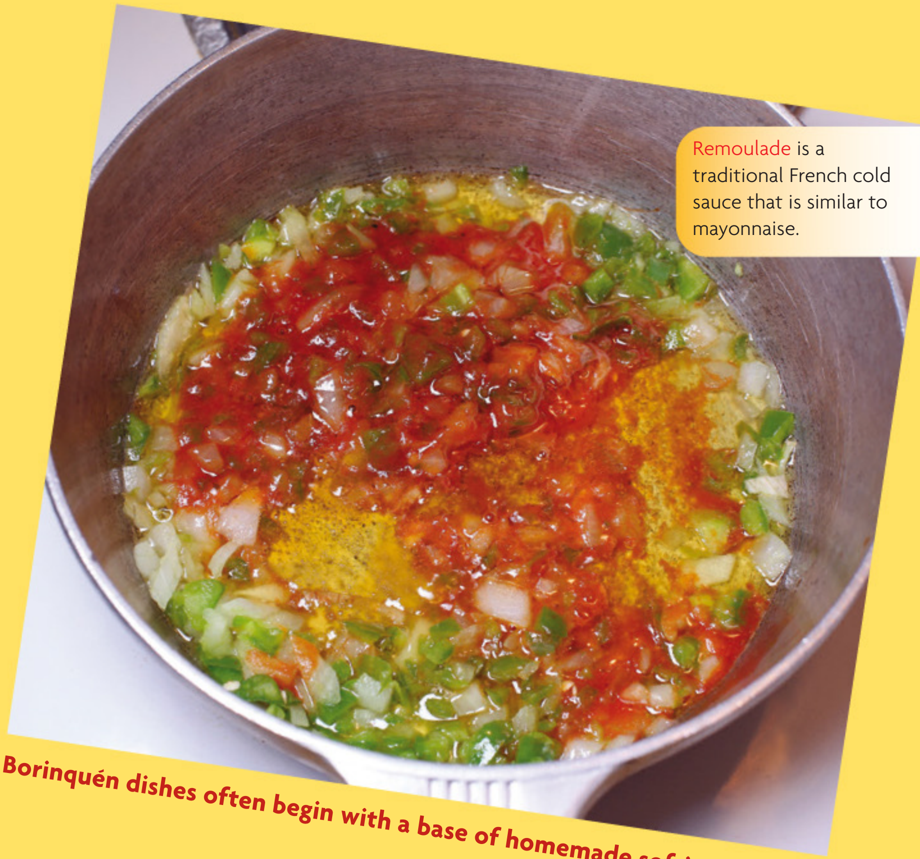
Borinquén derives from *Borikén,* which is a Taino word meaning "Great Land of the Valiant Lord." The Taino people referred to their island as *Borikén*. Today, Puerto Ricans often refer to themselves as *Boricuas,* which is derived from *Borikén.*

FLAVORFUL FOUNDATIONS

All great meals kick off with a topnotch base. The French create masterpieces with humble butter. The Japanese start with simple soy sauce. Italians won't even prep without pure olive oil. Borinquén chefs are no different. *Sofrito* and *adobo* are the unofficial national flavors of Puerto Rico.

Sofrito is a tangy medley of peppers, onions, garlic, and cilantro. It's used as a base for soups and stews, a dip for pork and chicken, and a remoulade for rice. Adobo blends garlic, oregano, onion, turmeric, and pepper. When wet, it's rubbed onto meats and poultry. When dry, it's sprinkled into stews, vegetables, and seafood.

Remoulade is a traditional French cold sauce that is similar to mayonnaise.



Borinquén dishes often begin with a base of homemade sofrito.

HOG-WILD

Puerto Ricans really enjoy *lechon,* and Guavate is the island's pork capital. Foodies mob the roadside vendors, eager for a bite of *lechon asado* (spit-roasted pig). Another favorite is *pernil* (pork shoulders that are barbequed for at least six hours) served with a traditional side of *arroz con gandules.* You can also pig out with a bowl of *mondongo* (tripe) or *gandinga* (thick stew containing pig organs). One of the best delicacies is a form of *chicharrón*, an edible plate made from crispy pork skin topped with meat, rice, and sofrito. No dishwasher required!

Pork is a mainstay in Puerto Rican cooking. It can be served roasted (ABOVE) or combined with other ingredients, such as rice and tomatoes (RIGHT).

Plantains are best sliced up and fried (TOP). They also are an important ingredient to make delicious *pasteles* (LEFT).

PASS THE PLANTAINS, POR FAVOR!

Another must-have is the plantain. But don't just bite into these large, green cousins of the banana. They need to be cooked first. But do dive into *mofongo*. That is a beloved dish made with fried plantains that's mixed with meat or chicken. It's so popular that it's eaten as an appetizer, a main meal, and a dessert! Fried plantains also are used as a bread substitute for *jibaritos*, a Cuban-like sandwich, or as a crust for savory meat pies called *piononos*. During Halloween, spidery-like fried plantains called *aranitas* appear to crawl across plates. Tiny green parcels of *pasteles* (plantain leaves stuffed with pork and adobe) deck the tables at Christmas.

FAST FACT

Although plantains now grow everywhere, they are not indigenous to the island.

HEAD TO THE STREET

Nearly every restaurant chain can be found in Puerto Rico, from burger joints to pizza parlors. But skip the fast food and head straight to the street. The food is super fresh, really tasty, and won't break the piggy bank.

Craving a hearty meal after a day of hiking through El Yunque's rainforest? Stop at a local eatery and enjoy a hearty *asopao de mariscos* (shellfish gumbo). Or try a platter of *arroz con carne mechada* (roast beef stuffed with onions and rice). Need a quick pick-me-up after discovering Old San Juan? Head to one of the many *guaguitas* (food trucks) and grab some sweet *tostones* (twice-fried plantain chips) or crispy *bacalaitos*. *Bacalaitos* look like gargantuan potato chips, but they are actually deep-fried cod that's been seasoned and sliced ultra-thin.

Don't pass up the *sorullitos* (cheese sticks made with cheddar) or the *alcapurrias* (yucca fritters packed with savory meat or seafood). And you must treat yourself to one of the many colorful *piraguas* (shaved ice flavored with tropical fruits). Or you can enjoy a Popsicle at any roadside *paleteria* (frozen treat stand).

Classical Puerto Rican food bursts with flavor, texture, and color. Vibrant and fresh, nothing quite beats this one-of-a-kind island fare. *¡La cocina criolla esta una fiesta en su boca!* ☆

So refreshing!

Food trucks offer some of the best chances to sample Borinquén fare (TOP). Shaved ice topped with fruit is a refreshing treat on a hot Caribbean summer day (LEFT).

Yucca is an evergreen plant with long spiky leaves that produces edible fruit.

TEMBLEQUE
PUERTO RICAN COCONUT PUDDING

by Jennifer Buchet

Tembleque is a traditional island dessert reserved for special occasions. The name means "shaky," which is perfect for this wiggly treat. You may need some adult help with this recipe—an extra pair of hands will be helpful with the stirring and the cleaning up. (And there's a lot of stirring!)

You Need

3 cans of coconut milk (13.5 oz each)
1 small can of condensed sweetened milk
⅔ cup cornstarch
1 tsp. ground nutmeg
several cinnamon sticks plus ground cinnamon to taste
a medium mixing bowl, measuring cups and spoons, a wooden spoon, a saucepan, and an 8×8-inch pan

I am trembling for tembleque.

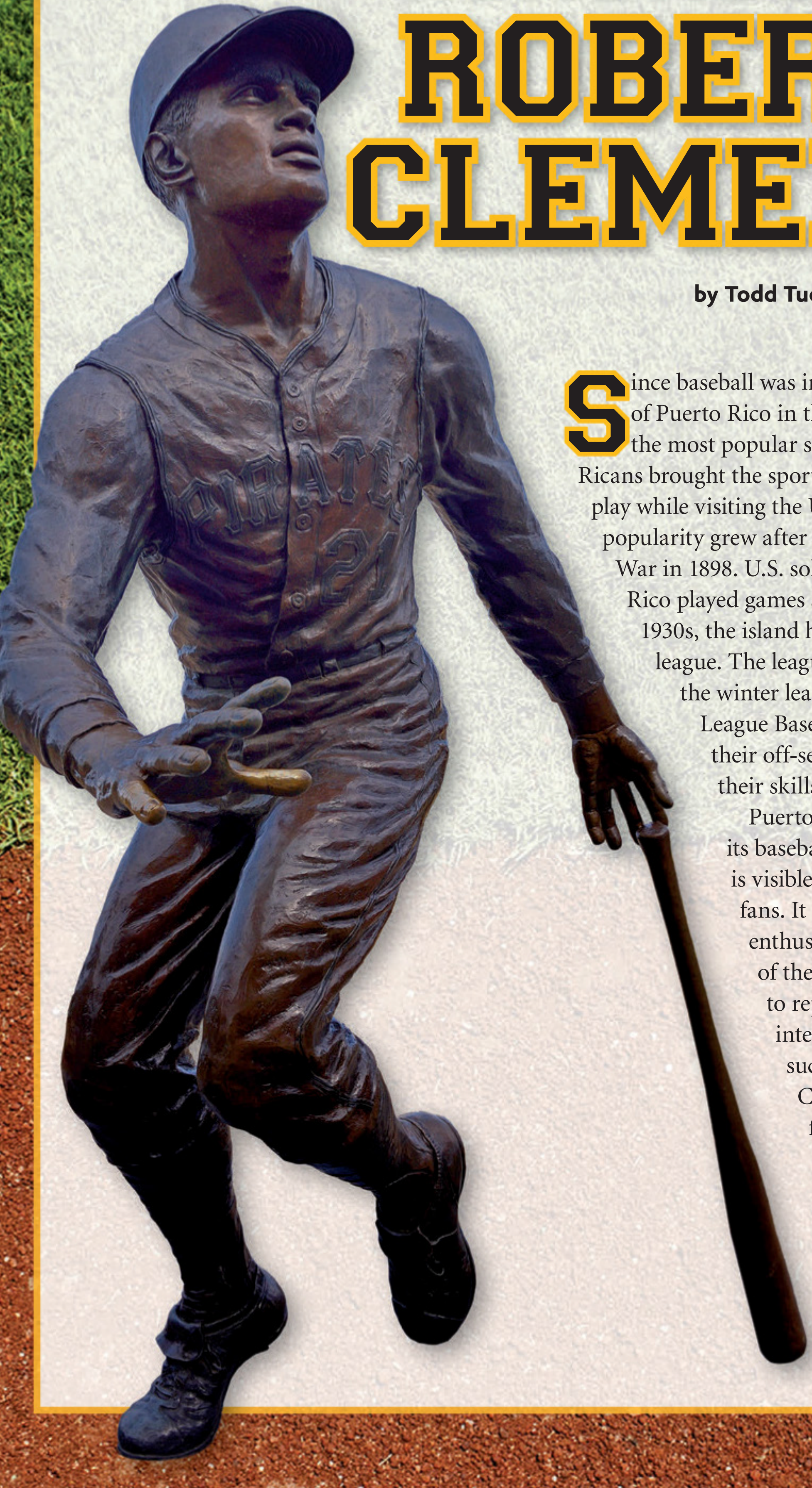
1. Using the wooden spoon, mix together all the ingredients in the mixing bowl.
2. Pour the mixture into the saucepan at medium-high heat. Keep mixing until bubbles start to form.
3. Lower the heat and stir even faster as the mixture thickens. After about 15–20 minutes, you'll see large bubbles start to pop. Keep stirring.
4. Carefully remove the cinnamon sticks.
5. Quickly pour the mix into the greased 8×8-inch pan. Let it cool on a counter. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for at least four hours.
6. Before serving, allow the tembleque to sit at room temperature for 10 minutes. Place a serving dish on top of the pan and invert onto dish. Slice and garnish with a dusting of cinnamon. Enjoy!

DID YOU KNOW?

Puerto Rico traditionally had an agricultural economy. Coffee and rum quickly became two of the highest-grossing cash crops on the island. Rum is a byproduct of sugar cane production and is now one of Puerto Rico's main exports. The island's rich volcanic soil is also perfect for growing coffee beans.

REMEMBERING ROBERTO CLEMENTE

by Todd Tuell



Since baseball was introduced to the people of Puerto Rico in the 1890s, it has become the most popular sport on the island. Puerto Ricans brought the sport home after learning to play while visiting the United States. Baseball's popularity grew after the Spanish-American War in 1898. U.S. soldiers stationed in Puerto Rico played games against local clubs. By the 1930s, the island had its own professional league. The league often is referred to as the winter league because many Major League Baseball (MLB) players spend their off-seasons there developing their skills.

Puerto Rico takes great pride in its baseball tradition. That pride is visible in the support from fans. It also can be seen in the enthusiasm and camaraderie of the players who are selected to represent Puerto Rico in international competition, such as in the World Baseball Classic that is played every four years. Puerto Rico has produced many Major League players including Hall of Famers Orlando Cepeda, Roberto Alomar, and Iván Rodríguez. Yet the greatest

Rincon
Parque Rafael Rivera Romero

Amateur baseball fields, such as Ricon's Parque Rafael Rivera Romero, can be found throughout Puerto Rico.

baseball player to hail from the small Caribbean island is Roberto Clemente. He has become known as the "Babe Ruth" of Puerto Rico.

Roberto Clemente Walker was born in 1934, in Carolina, Puerto Rico. He was the youngest of seven children in a family without a lot of means. He grew up working alongside his brothers and father, harvesting sugar cane and loading it into trucks.

At a young age, Roberto showed great athletic talent. By the time he was 17 years old, he was a member of the Santurce Crabbers team in the Puerto Rican Baseball League. Playing in that league got him the attention of scouts. By his 20th birthday, he had signed a contract with MLB's Brooklyn Dodgers.

To develop their new player's talents, the Dodgers sent Clemente to play for their minor league club in Montreal. It required him to move from his warm island home in the Caribbean to the much colder, snowy Canada. In addition to climate shock, Clemente also endured culture shock. The language barrier was especially difficult. Puerto Ricans speak Spanish and English. Montreal Canadians speak French.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hiram Bithorn and Luis Olmo were the first two baseball players from Puerto Rico to play in the Major Leagues. Bithorn, a pitcher, played his first game for the Chicago Cubs in 1942. He played for four seasons. Olmo, an outfielder, played his first game for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1943. He played for six seasons, ending his career with the Boston Braves.

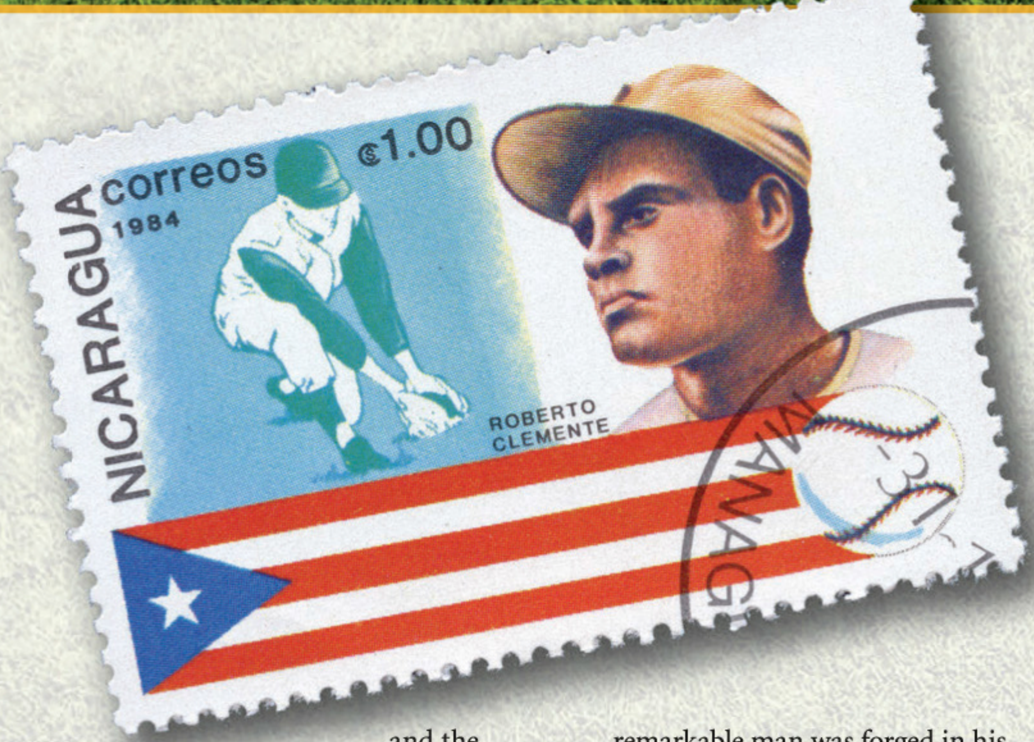
> "Roberto Clemente played the game of baseball with great passion. That passion could only be matched by his unrelenting commitment to make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate and those in need. People saw Roberto as a great ballplayer and humanitarian. He was also a great father, husband, teammate, and friend."
>
> —*Manny Sanguillén, teammate*

But Clemente got help from other Spanish-speaking teammates to ease his transition.

The Dodgers knew that Clemente was a great player. They tried to hide his raw talent from other teams. Instead of awarding him a spot on their major league roster, they limited his playing time during the 1954 season with their Triple-A team. The Dodgers thought scouts from other teams wouldn't notice him. But the situation left Clemente available in the Rule 5 draft following the season. The Pittsburgh Pirates snatched up Clemente with their first selection. He went on to play 18 years as the Pirates' starting right fielder.

Clemente was proud of his Puerto Rican heritage. Teammates and sportscasters who called him "Bob" or "Bobby" where corrected to use his given name, Roberto. His chosen number "21" came from counting the number of letters in his full name—Roberto Clemente Walker.

Over his career, Clemente won many awards. He was truly a complete player. He won the batting title four times and the Gold Glove as the best fielder at his position 12 times, demonstrating his skill both at the plate and in the field. Clemente also was an All-Star 15 times, the Most Valuable Player in the National League in 1966,

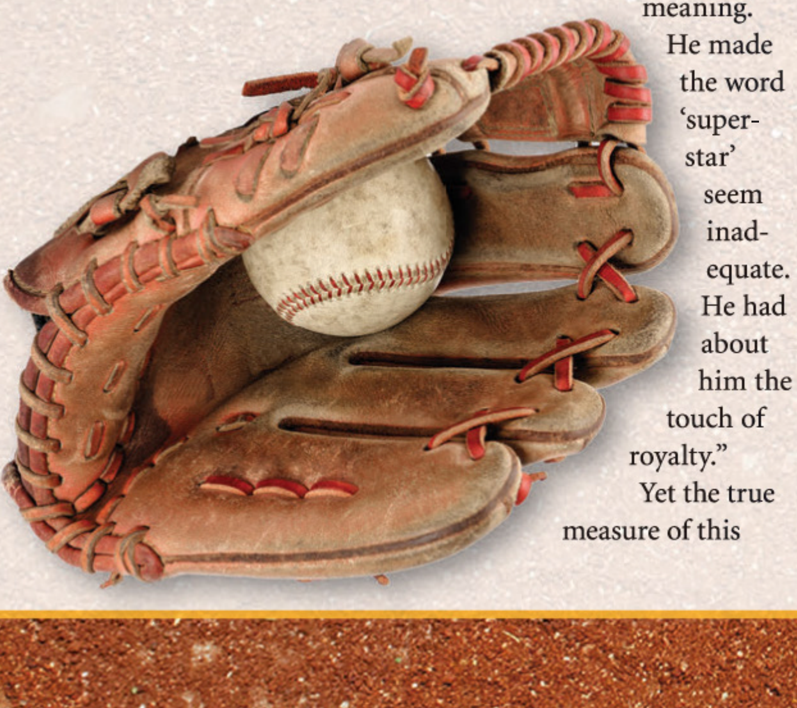


Nicaragua commemorated Clemente with a postage stamp in 1984.

A humanitarian is a person who is devoted to the promotion of human welfare.

Waived means put aside a rule.

and the World Series MVP in 1971. He ended his career with a .312 batting average and 3,000 hits. Only 10 players had ever reached 3,000 hits before Clemente. More important to Clemente himself was his role as a member of two World Series Championship teams for the city of Pittsburgh. Bowie Kuhn, MLB commissioner at the end of Clemente's career, said of him, "He gave the term 'complete' a new meaning. He made the word 'superstar' seem inadequate. He had about him the touch of royalty." Yet the true measure of this remarkable man was forged in his work off the field. Clemente was a humanitarian with a heart for young people growing up poor, as he had. In his off-seasons, he offered baseball clinics and distributed equipment for underprivileged children in Latin America. He also purchased and sent food and supplies to areas devastated by natural disasters.



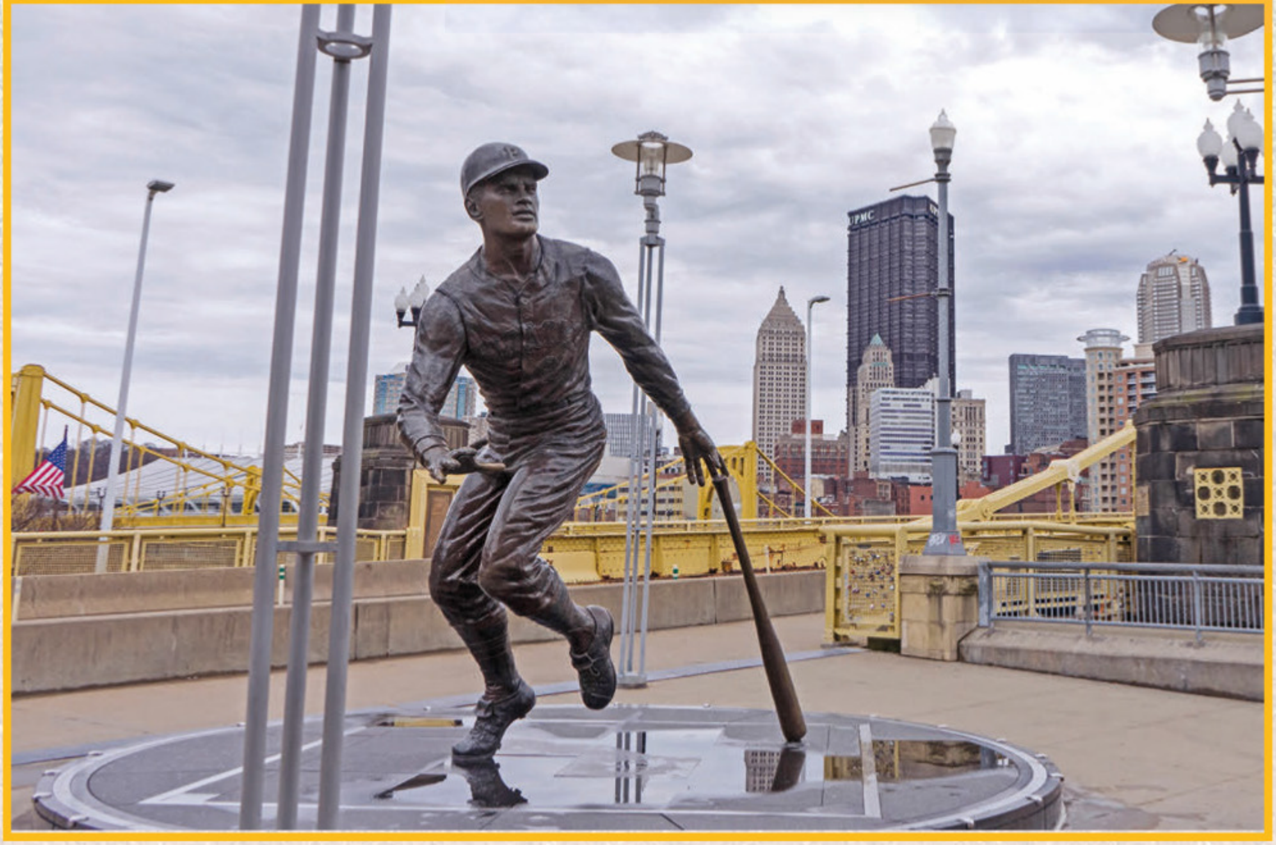
In the aftermath of a December 1972 earthquake in Nicaragua, Clemente organized relief. When he learned that the food, drinking water, and other supplies were being stolen by the Nicaraguan army, he decided to make sure the next load reached the people for whom it was intended. On New Year's Eve, he boarded a plane in Puerto Rico loaded with his donations. The plane crashed into the ocean shortly after takeoff.

The Baseball Writers' Association held a special vote less than three months after Clemente's death. The writers waived their own rule requiring a minimum five-year waiting period before a player was eligible for consideration for the Baseball Hall of Fame. They voted to induct Clemente into the hall on March 20, 1973.

Clemente's legacy as an outstanding human being lives on. Beginning in 1971, the MLB Commissioner's Award was presented "to the player that best exemplifies the game of baseball, sportsmanship, community involvement and the individual's contribution to his team." After Clemente's death, the award was renamed the Roberto Clemente Award. It is given to the player who best represents those traits. ☆

CLEMENTE'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS

- **18 seasons with Pittsburgh Pirates**
- **3,000 hits during Major League Baseball career**
- **4-time National League Batting Title (1961, 1964, 1965, 1967)**
- **12-time Gold Glove (1961–1972)**
- **15-time All Star (1960–1967, 1969–1972)**
- **National League Most Valuable Player (1966)**
- **2-time World Series Champion (1960, 1971)**
- **World Series Most Valuable Player (1971)**
- **Baseball Hall of Fame inductee (1973)**
- **Presidential Medal of Freedom (2003)**



A statue of Clemente stands outside PNC Park, the home of the Pittsburgh Pirates.

ALL ABOUT

Can you solve this crossword puzzle about Puerto Rico? All the answers can be found in this issue. The solution is on page 49.

ACROSS

1. Puerto Ricans are U.S. _____ and are subject to U.S. laws.
3. In recent years, residents of Puerto Rico have been weighing the pros and cons of applying for U.S. _____.
4. Puerto Rico's rich volcanic soil is perfect for growing _____, which has become a profitable export.
5. Roberto _____ achieved fame as a Major League Baseball player and as a humanitarian.
8. Although not native to the island, _____ are a popular ingredient in Puerto Rican dishes.
9. The United States claimed Puerto Rico as a territory after the _____-American War in 1898.
10. Conquistador Juan _____ _____ _____ was the first Spanish governor of Puerto Rico.
13. This historic city is the capital of Puerto Rico.

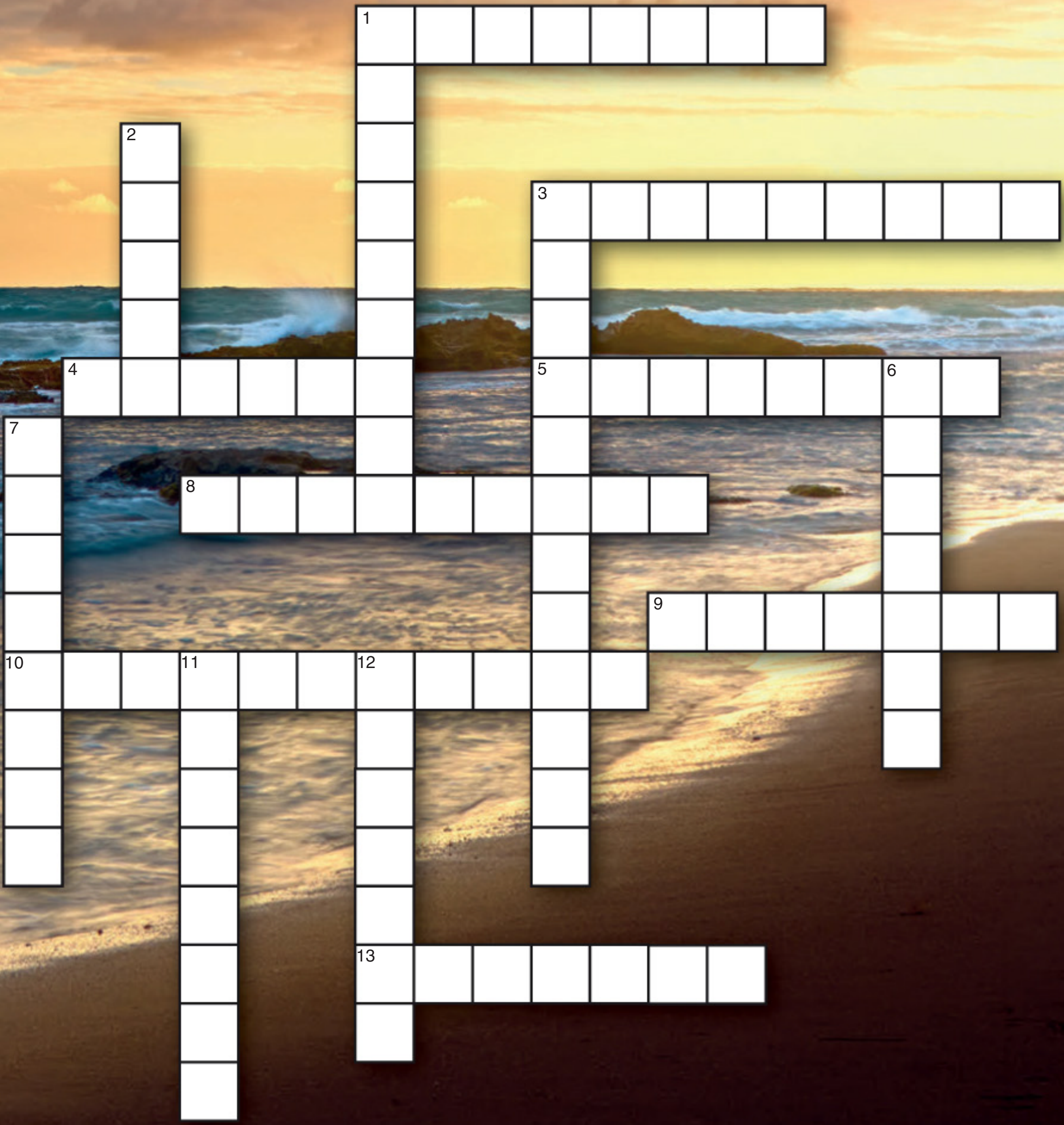
DOWN

1. Puerto Rico is located in the _____ Sea.
2. The _____ were the Indigenous people of Puerto Rico.
3. The Spanish built Castillo de _____ _____ as a fortification to protect San Juan from land invasions.
6. A tropical climate and beautiful beaches have made Puerto Rico a popular _____ destination.
7. Translated from Spanish to English, *Puerto Rico* means "_____ _____."
11. Puerto Ricans are represented in the U.S. _____ by a non-voting resident commissioner.
12. Puerto Rico has two official languages: Spanish and _____.

PUERTO RICO

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

by Will Bremen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by Emily Cambias

ISLAND INHABITANTS

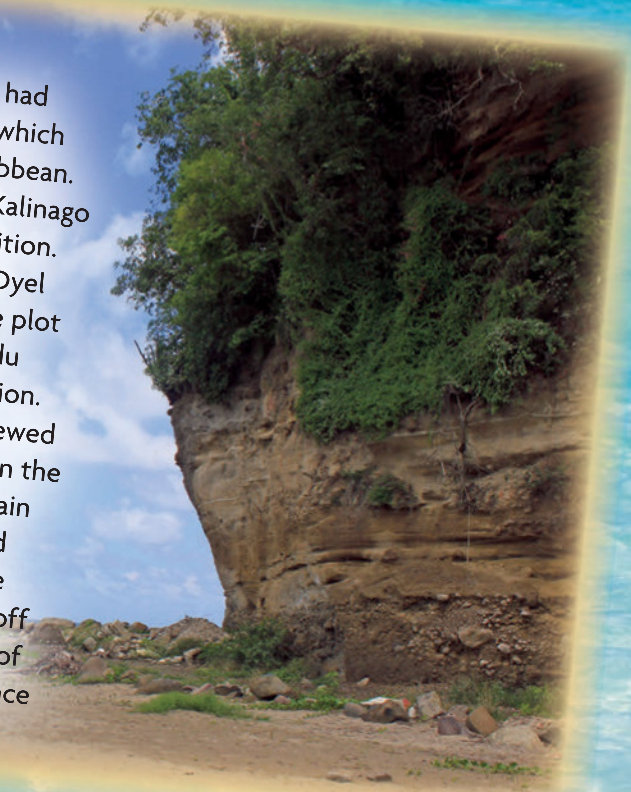
Long before European contact in 1492, the Caribbean was full of people who had called its islands home for thousands of years.

WALL ART

Using animal fat mixed with charcoal, prehistoric artists drew thick and dark lines on the cave walls. Season after season, Taino, Igneri, and Carib people added to the walls. They covered 55 separate caves with more than 6,000 drawings. Those shapes of birds, lizards, dogs, and people were protected for 2,000 years. Located in the Dominican Republic and known today as the Pomier Caves, they are important archaeological sites in the Caribbean. Modern Taino and Carib people consider the cave drawings a connection to their cultural history. Yet, the Pomier Caves aren't safe. Some sections have been damaged by limestone mining. Activists have pressured the Dominican government to preserve the cave art.

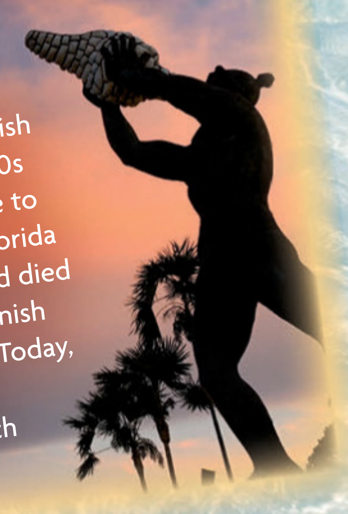
Freedom or Death

By the middle of the 17th century, the French had colonized most islands in the Lesser Antilles, which is the easternmost chain of islands in the Caribbean. Only a few islanders resisted the French. The Kalinago people of Grenada raised the strongest opposition. In 1649, Martinique's French governor, Jacques Dyel du Parquet, offered gifts in exchange for a large plot of land. A Kalinago chief agreed to a deal, and du Parquet ordered men to start building a plantation. But other Kalinago villagers were upset: They viewed the French as invaders. Conflict erupted between the two groups. After fierce fighting across hilly terrain near Sauteurs, a group of Kalinago warriors found themselves trapped against a cliff. Rather than be captured and enslaved by the French, they leapt off the cliff to their deaths. Their story remains part of Grenada's folklore. It is a symbol of native resistance against colonization.



Coastal Dwellers

For several thousand years, the Tequesta people lived around present-day Miami, Florida. They summered on the barrier islands, and they wintered on the mainland. They stuck close to shorelines where fish were plentiful and wild corn grew. The Tequesta did not want contact with Europeans. They especially clashed with Spanish missionaries, who arrived in Florida in the mid-1500s and who attempted to convert Indigenous people to Christianity. By 1763, as Spain prepared to cede Florida to Great Britain, most of the Tequesta people had died from fighting, enslavement, and disease. The Spanish evacuated the few remaining Tequesta to Cuba. Today, two historic Tequesta archaeological sites have been preserved in South Florida: Pompano Beach Mound and the Miami Circle.

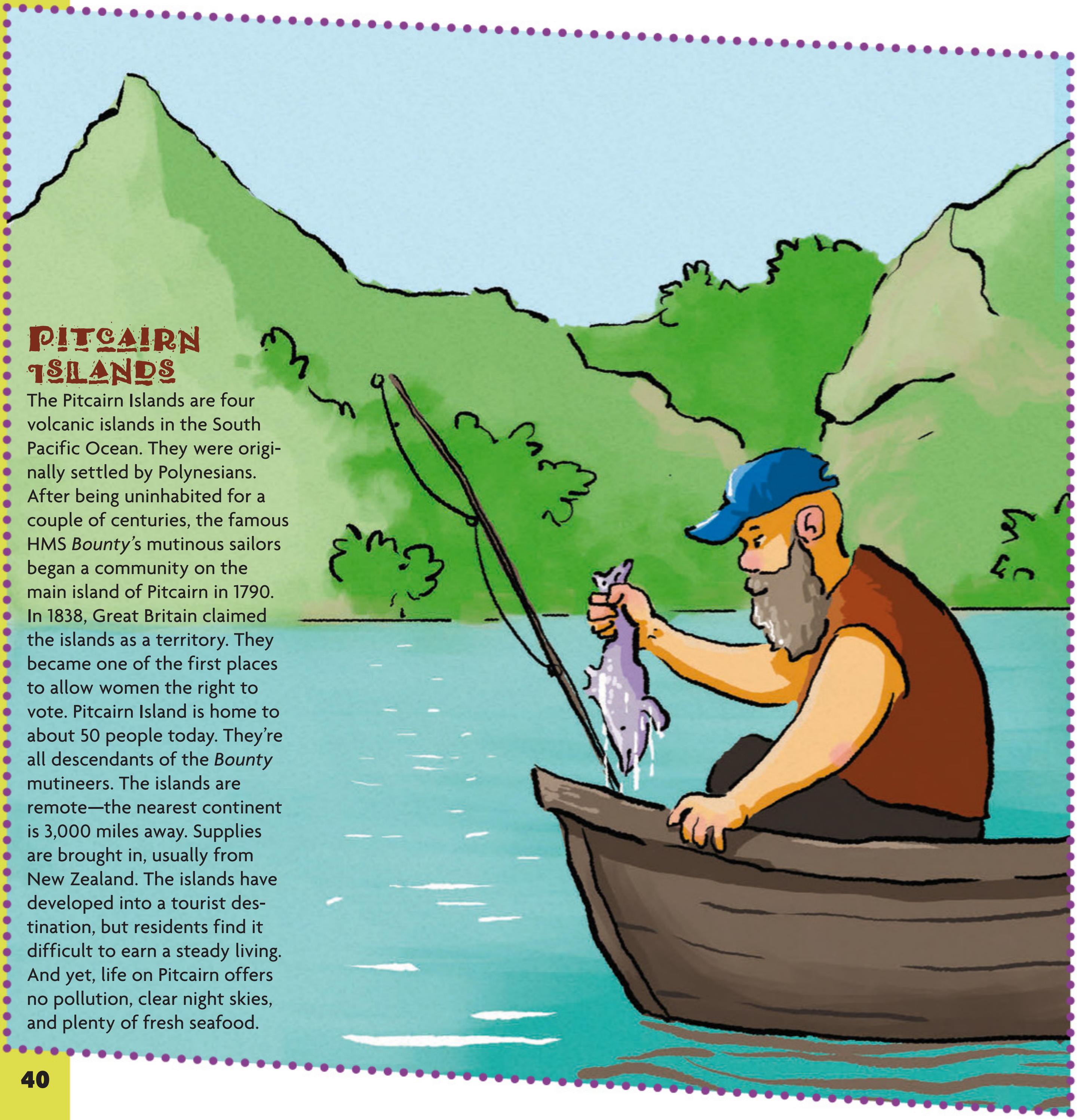


GOING GLOBAL

by Bryan Langdo

ISLAND LIFE

Here are three diverse island territories from around the world.

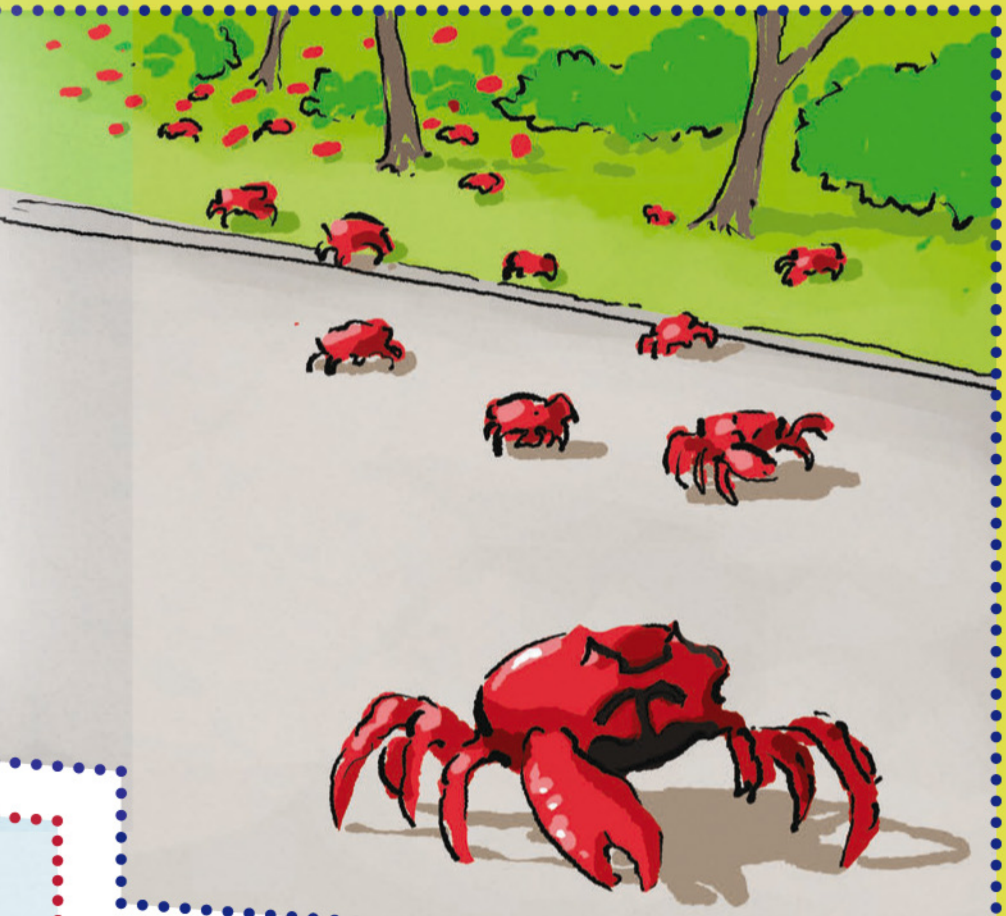


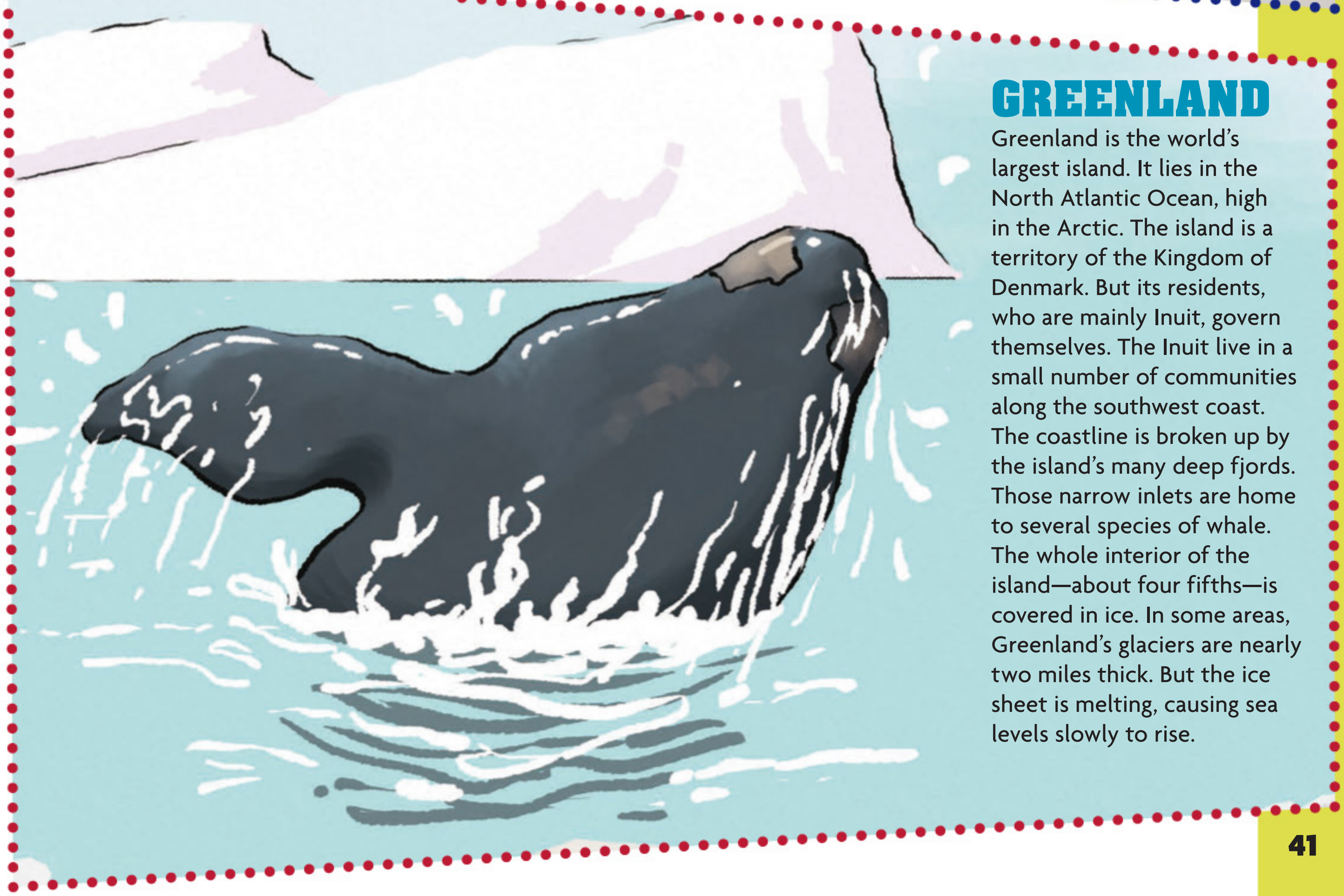
PITCAIRN ISLANDS

The Pitcairn Islands are four volcanic islands in the South Pacific Ocean. They were originally settled by Polynesians. After being uninhabited for a couple of centuries, the famous HMS *Bounty*'s mutinous sailors began a community on the main island of Pitcairn in 1790. In 1838, Great Britain claimed the islands as a territory. They became one of the first places to allow women the right to vote. Pitcairn Island is home to about 50 people today. They're all descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers. The islands are remote—the nearest continent is 3,000 miles away. Supplies are brought in, usually from New Zealand. The islands have developed into a tourist destination, but residents find it difficult to earn a steady living. And yet, life on Pitcairn offers no pollution, clear night skies, and plenty of fresh seafood.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND

Christmas Island is in the Indian Ocean, about 900 miles from Australia. A British captain gave the island its name after it was sighted by a member of his crew on Christmas Day 1643. Great Britain claimed the island in 1888 and permitted a company to mine the island's large amounts of phosphate. That valuable mineral is used as a fertilizer. Since 1958, the island has been a territory of Australia. More than half of it is a national park. Christmas Island is best known for its annual crab migration around November. That's when millions of red crabs emerge from the island's forests to lay their eggs in the sea.



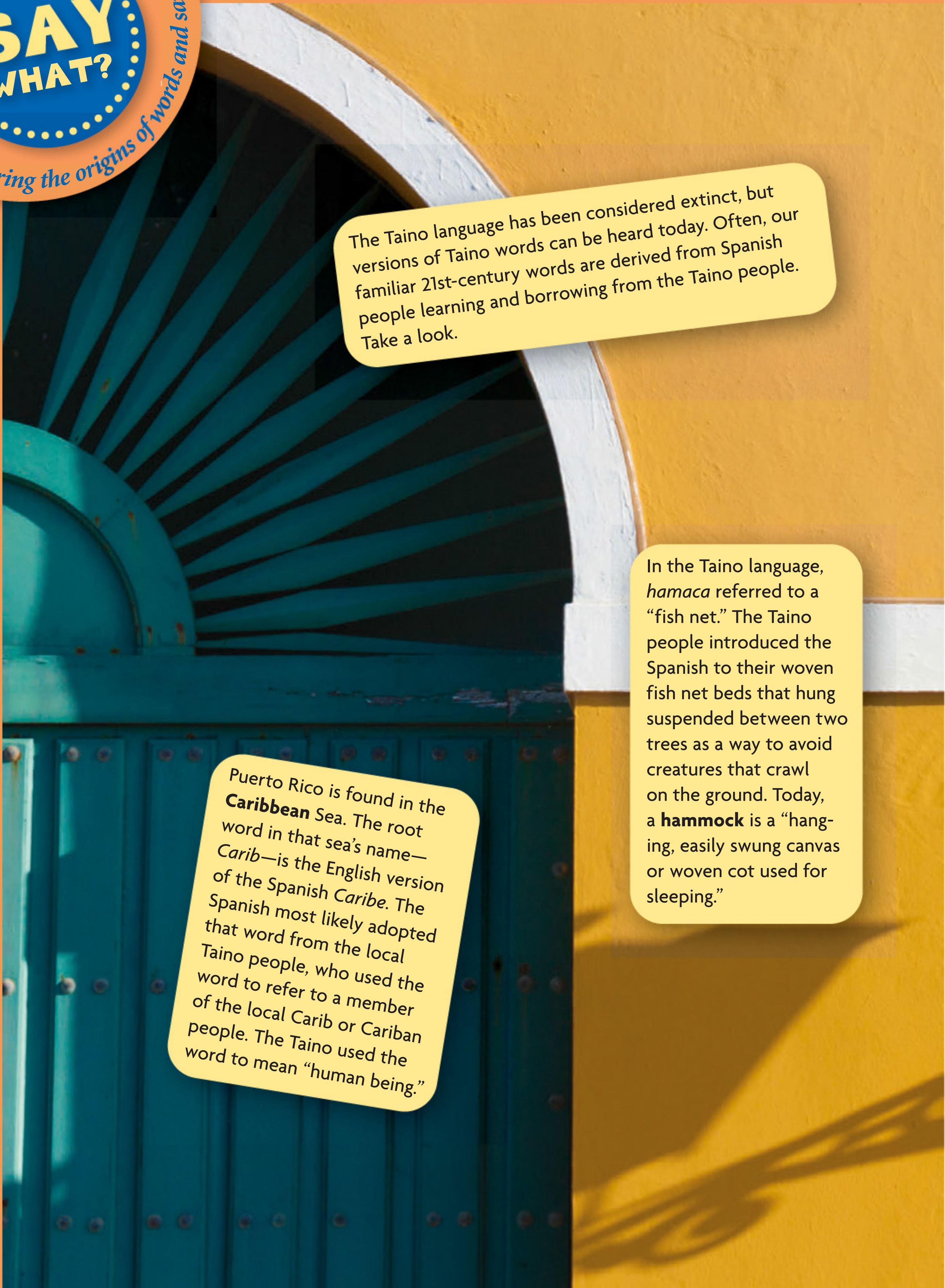


GREENLAND

Greenland is the world's largest island. It lies in the North Atlantic Ocean, high in the Arctic. The island is a territory of the Kingdom of Denmark. But its residents, who are mainly Inuit, govern themselves. The Inuit live in a small number of communities along the southwest coast. The coastline is broken up by the island's many deep fjords. Those narrow inlets are home to several species of whale. The whole interior of the island—about four fifths—is covered in ice. In some areas, Greenland's glaciers are nearly two miles thick. But the ice sheet is melting, causing sea levels slowly to rise.

SAY WHAT?

exploring the origins of words and sayings



The Taino language has been considered extinct, but versions of Taino words can be heard today. Often, our familiar 21st-century words are derived from Spanish people learning and borrowing from the Taino people. Take a look.

Puerto Rico is found in the **Caribbean** Sea. The root word in that sea's name—*Carib*—is the English version of the Spanish *Caribe*. The Spanish most likely adopted that word from the local Taino people, who used the word to refer to a member of the local Carib or Cariban people. The Taino used the word to mean "human being."

In the Taino language, *hamaca* referred to a "fish net." The Taino people introduced the Spanish to their woven fish net beds that hung suspended between two trees as a way to avoid creatures that crawl on the ground. Today, a **hammock** is a "hanging, easily swung canvas or woven cot used for sleeping."

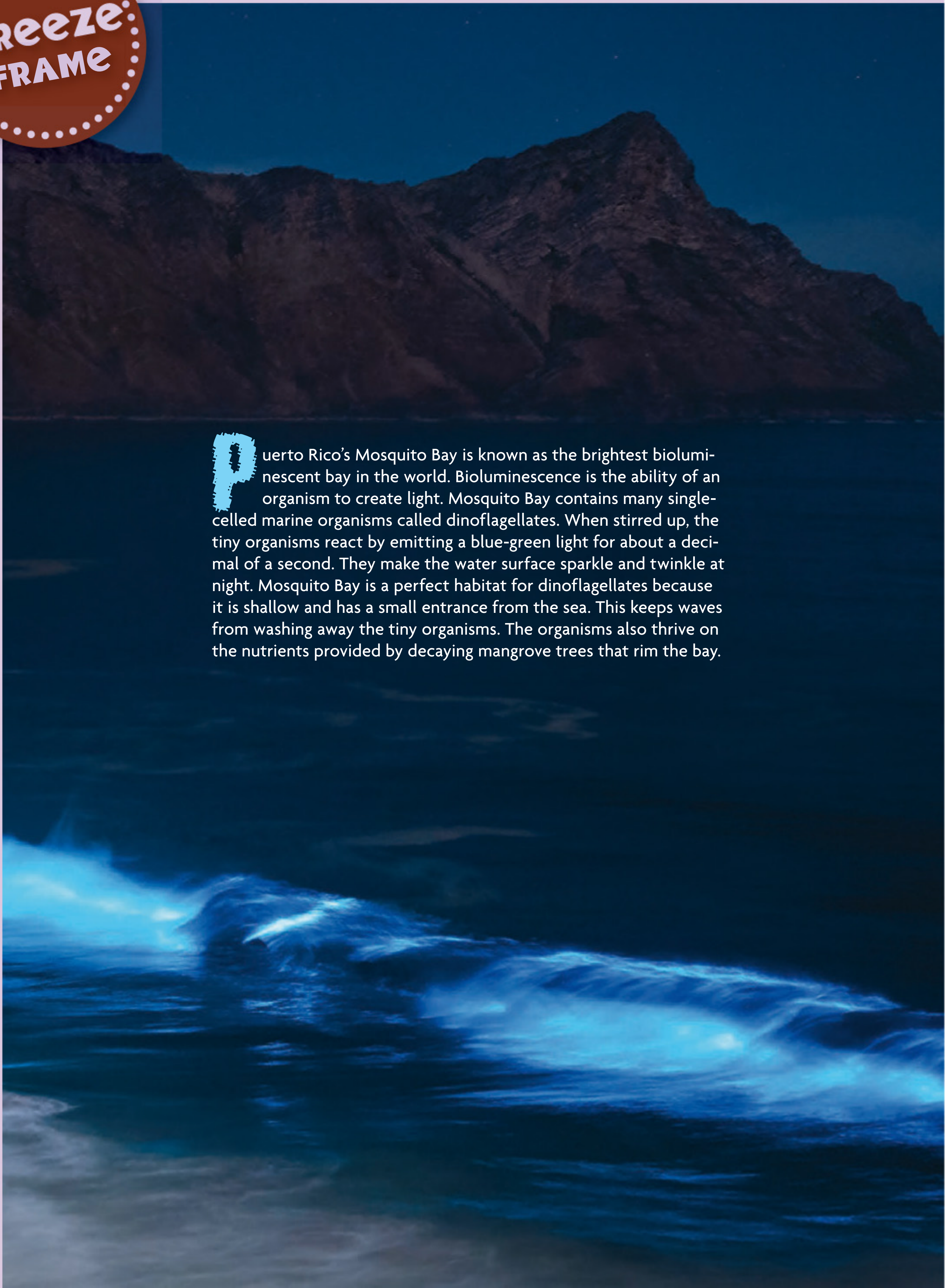
Both the Taino and the Spanish used *tabaco* to refer to a "smoking pipe." But within 50 years of Spanish colonization, a Spanish conquistador used the word to refer to dried leaves that were rolled together and smoked. The English word that evolved is **tobacco.** (The Spanish also may have been influenced by the Arabic word *tabbaq,* which refers to "various medicinal herbs.")

The Taino word for a sweet potato is *batata.* The Spanish altered it to *patata.* Today, **potato** is defined as a "widely cultivated South American plant with starchy, edible tubers."

Barbacoa described two things for the Taino people. It could be a "raised platform for storing or cooking food" or the "method of cooking meat on a platform." Today, the English word **barbecue** blends those meanings. It refers to a "grill, pit, or outdoor fireplace for cooking meat."

The Spanish *huracán* derives from the Taino *hurakán.* It is the word Taino people used to refer to the god of the storm. Today, a **hurricane** is a "severe tropical cyclone in the equatorial location that forms in the Atlantic Ocean or Caribbean Sea."

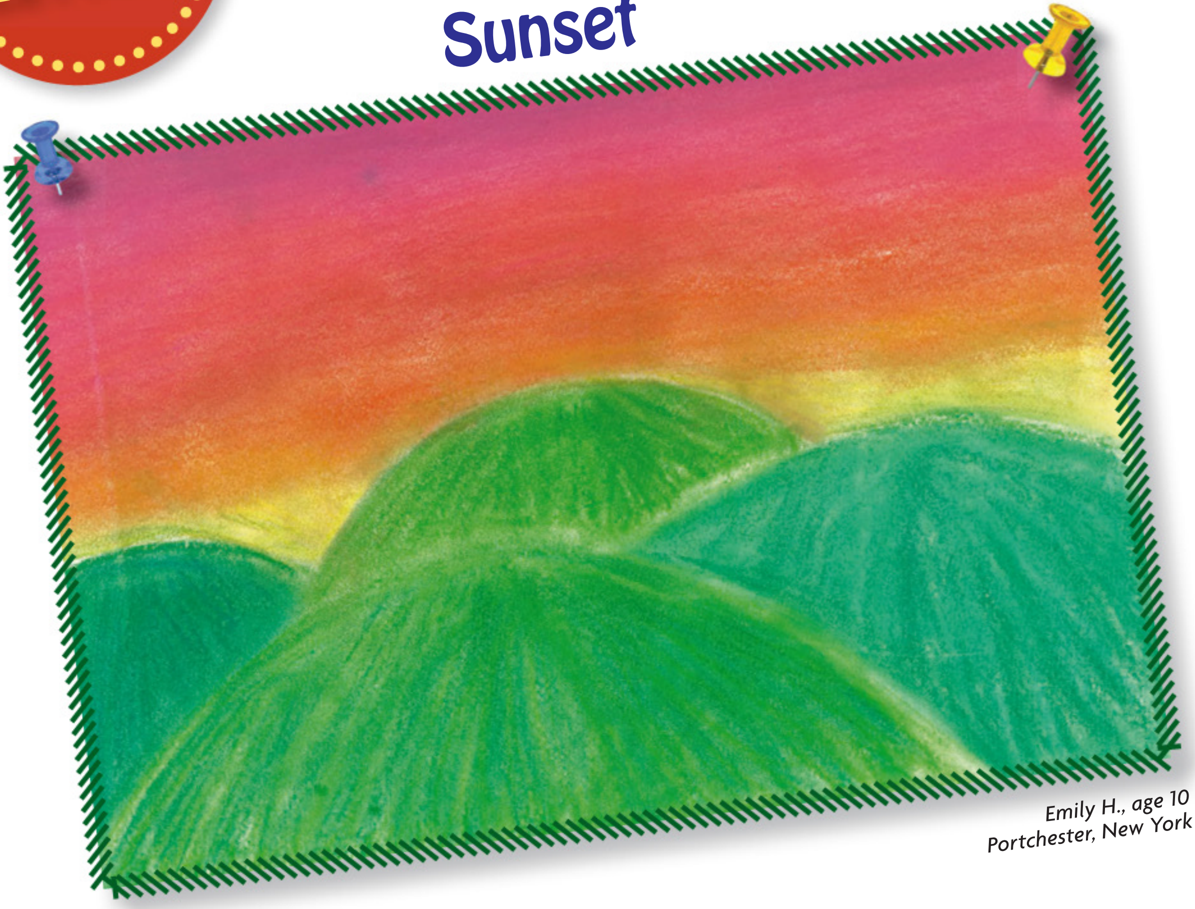
FREEZE FRAME



Puerto Rico's Mosquito Bay is known as the brightest bioluminescent bay in the world. Bioluminescence is the ability of an organism to create light. Mosquito Bay contains many single-celled marine organisms called dinoflagellates. When stirred up, the tiny organisms react by emitting a blue-green light for about a decimal of a second. They make the water surface sparkle and twinkle at night. Mosquito Bay is a perfect habitat for dinoflagellates because it is shallow and has a small entrance from the sea. This keeps waves from washing away the tiny organisms. The organisms also thrive on the nutrients provided by decaying mangrove trees that rim the bay.

YOUR LETTERS

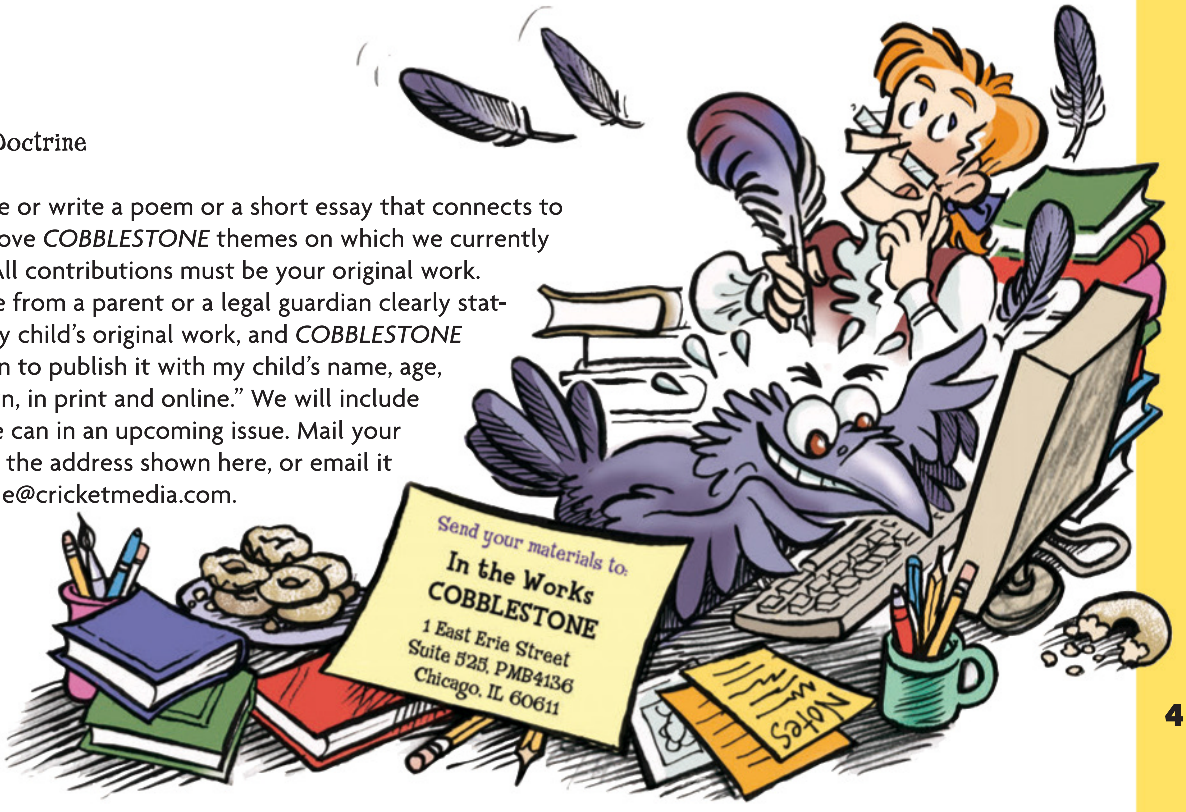
Sunset



Emily H., age 10
Portchester, New York

Citizenship
Hollywood
The Monroe Doctrine

Draw a picture or write a poem or a short essay that connects to one of the above *COBBLESTONE* themes on which we currently are working. All contributions must be your original work. Include a note from a parent or a legal guardian clearly stating: “This is my child’s original work, and *COBBLESTONE* has permission to publish it with my child’s name, age, and hometown, in print and online.” We will include as many as we can in an upcoming issue. Mail your submission to the address shown here, or email it to cobblestone@cricketmedia.com.


Send your materials to:
In the Works
COBBLESTONE
1 East Erie Street
Suite 525, PMB4136
Chicago, IL 60611
Notes

SPOTLIGHT ON...

by Ebenezer

An Island Treasure

Puerto Rico's most famous natural site is El Yunque National Forest. Covering 29,000 acres, it is one of the smallest rainforests on Earth. But it is biologically diverse. Many of its hundreds of animal and plant species are found only there. It is home to snails as big as a fist. The sounds of the coquí are common in the forest, and the rare green Puerto Rican parrot can be heard making its strange bugle-like call. Many plants, such as giant ferns and mosses, thrive in the rainforest climate. Beautiful orchids and other air plants grow on the trunks and branches of mahogany, teak, and rosewood trees. Visitors can hike on nature trails, swim in waterfalls and streams, and enjoy amazing views. But be prepared: It rains at least four times a day in the forest! For more information about the only tropical rainforest in the U.S. forest system, check out the USDA Forest Service website at **www.fs.usda.gov/recmain/elyunque/recreation**.

DR. D'S MYSTERY HERO

by Dennis Denenberg

PUERTO RICAN PROUD

This month's mystery hero is a proud son of Puerto Rico even though he was born and raised in a Hispanic New York City neighborhood. He spent a month every summer with his grandparents in Vega Alta, Puerto Rico.

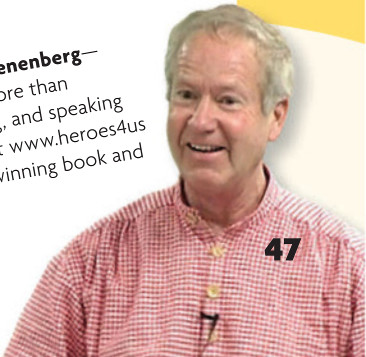
Our hero was a good student and attended a school for gifted children, Hunter College Elementary School. Admission was competitive, but our hero met all the standards. He continued his education at Hunter College High School.

Our hero's childhood home was filled with music, particularly salsa and Broadway show tunes. His family had a large record collection, and he spent many hours listening to it. He saw his first Broadway musical, *Les Miserables,* when he was seven years old. He loved it!

Music and acting began to have a large impact on his life. In high school, he was cast in a leading role in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance.* Performing in shows became important to our hero as a teenager.

Our hero also learned to play the piano. He gave his first recital when he was seven years old. He was taught to play classical compositions, but his interests broadened as he grew up. He became a skilled rapper.

He attended Wesleyan University in Connecticut, where he majored in theater. While a student, he wrote a draft of what would become his first successful show, *In the Heights.* He followed that success with his Broadway blockbuster about one of America's Founding Fathers—*Hamilton: An American Musical.* Can you guess the name of this singer, composer, actor, and filmmaker? Answer on page 49.



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老 师
小狗
The Little Dog
Cricket
Spider

Cricket

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JUST FOR FUN

Hey, kids!

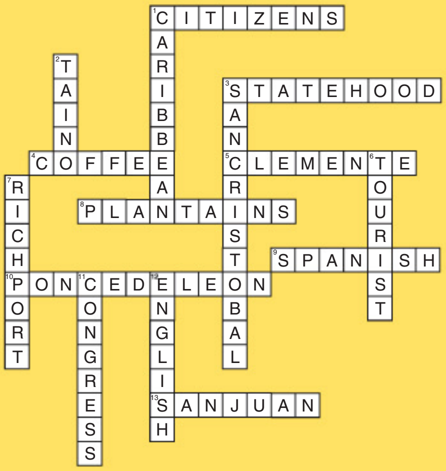
We're looking for a funny caption for this photo. Send your idea, name, and address to: Just for Fun, *COBBLESTONE,* 1 East Erie Street, Suite 525, PMB4136, Chicago, IL 60611, or email it to cobblestone@cricketmedia.com. Include a note from a parent or a legal guardian clearly stating: "This is my child's original work, and *COBBLESTONE* has permission to publish it with my child's name, age, and hometown, in print and online."

November Winners!

You are NOT killing the turkey! Jonah Williams, age 7 Carrollton, Georgia
Why is it called "buckaroo"? It should be called "chickaroo"! Owen Williams Raleigh, North Carolina
He went THATAWAY! Lily, age 11 Salem, Oregon
Who you calling "chicken"? Only a brave dude can be a sheriff! Alex Smith, age 10 Springfield, Virginia

Answer to Dr. D's Mystery Hero from page 47: Lin-Manuel Miranda

Answers to All About Puerto Rico Crossword Puzzle from page 36:


1 CITIZENS
1 CARIBBEAN
2 TAINO
3 STATEHOOD
3 SANCRISTOBAL
4 COFFEE
5 CLEMENTE
6 TOURIST
7 RICHPORT
8 PLANTAINS
9 SPANISH
10 PONCEDELEON
11 CONGRESS
12 ENGLISH
13 SANJUAN

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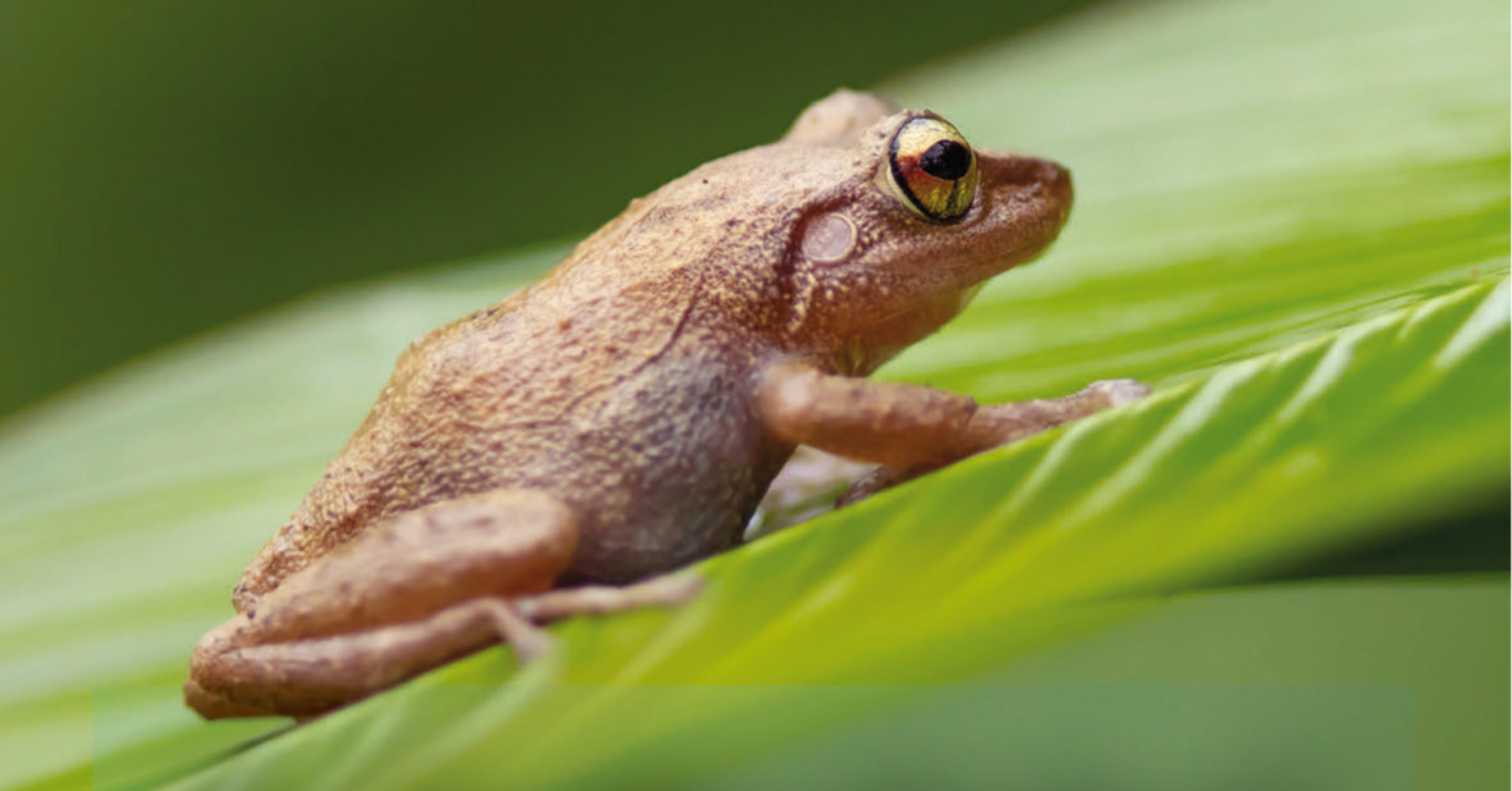

Can You Hear Me Now?

Puerto Ricans have a saying: *Soy de aquí, como el coquí*. It translates to "I'm from here, like the coquí." *Coquí* is the common name for more than a dozen species of small, one- to two-inch frogs that can be found throughout Puerto Rico. The name comes from the mating sound male frogs make at night. It sounds like "co-kee." The "co" warns other males to stay away, while the "kee" attracts female frogs. Coquís sing all night—from when the sun sets to when the sun rises. They are arboreal, which means that they mostly live in trees. Because of that, they don't have webbed feet like other frogs. Instead, they have special pads on their toes that help them stick to and climb their tree homes. Unlike other frogs, who lay their eggs in water, coquís lay their eggs in plants. When the eggs hatch, little frogs with tails emerge—the tadpole phase of their development occurs in the eggs. Coquís vary in color—they can be brown, green, or yellow. Their average life span in the wild is about one year. But habitat loss and a harmful fungal disease in their tropical home threaten the coquís' future.